COLLEGE VOLUNTARY STUDY COURSES

A Life at Its Best

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COLLEGE VOLUNTARY STUDY COURSES

SECOND YEAR—PART I

A LIFE AT ITS BEST

"*This one thing I do.*"—PAUL OF TARSUS

BY

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WRITTEN UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
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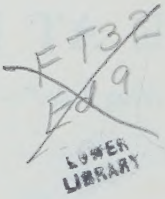

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COLLEGE VOLUNTARY STUDY COURSES

"A Life at Its Best" is the third of a series of text-books known as College Voluntary Study Courses. The general outline for this curriculum has been prepared by the Committee on Voluntary Study of the Council of North American Student Movements, representing the Student Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and the Student Volunteer Movement, and the Sub-Committee on College Courses of the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations, representing twenty-nine communions. Therefore the text-books are planned for the use of student classes in the Sunday School, as well as for the supplementary groups on the campus. The present text-book has been written under the direction of these Committees.

The text-books are not suitable for use in the academic curriculum, as they have been definitely planned for voluntary study groups.

This series, covering four years, will form a minimum curriculum for the voluntary study of the Bible, foreign missions, and North American problems. Daily Bible Readings are printed with each text-book. The student viewpoint is given first emphasis—what are the student interests? what are the student problems?

BOOKS IN THE SERIES

First Year:

PART I—STUDENT STANDARDS OF ACTION, by Harrison S. Elliott and Ethel Cutler.

PART II—CHRISTIAN STANDARDS IN LIFE, by J. Lovell Murray and Frederick M. Harris.

Second Year:

PART I—A LIFE AT ITS BEST, by Richard Henry Edwards and Ethel Cutler.

INTRODUCTION

This book is not a chronological study of the life of Paul. Neither does it attempt to expound his theology. It is intended to present the great apostle as a man of action, as a messenger of the Gospel at work in the world. In this presentation it is hoped that the leading characteristics of a life at its best stand out unmistakably.

While no extended study of the epistles of Paul is here included, large use has been made of selections. These have been used, just as passages from any correspondence, simply as suggestive of the character and ideals of the writer.

In many of the Scripture passages quoted in this book, some use has been made of italics. These have been introduced, as a general rule, by the authors for purposes of emphasis. Since it is the custom of our English versions to introduce italics to indicate words inserted by the translator for the sake of greater clearness, the authors' practice occasionally results in slight confusion. It seems, however, that the advantages of the practice far outweigh the really slight disadvantage.

Grateful acknowledgment for persistent and painstaking help in the preparation of this manuscript is made to the members of the Committee on Voluntary Study of the Council of North American Student Movements and to the members of the Sub-Committee on College Courses of the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations. Special thanks are tendered to the Reverend Melancthon W. Jacobus, D.D., Dean of Hartford Theological Seminary, for manuscript revision with regard to the use of Bible passages.

CHAPTER I

A MAN OF ACTION

"I can do all things."

A man of intrepid action, alert, eager, vehement, quick in decision, swift in his movements, always getting things done—such a man was Paul of Tarsus. A strong sense of momentum permeates everything he does and says. He speeds from city to city, intense and restless as a modern; or dictates letters which surge so full of ideas that the words come tumbling down over each other upon the page. No one ever seemed to know where he might be expected to break out next. Now at Tarsus, now at Jerusalem, now at Rome; men hailed him as he passed, went out to bid him goodbye, or found a little note asking them to send along a coat and parchments he had left behind. There seemed to be an inner clutch in the life of the man which carried him on from city to city like one who said, "Let us go elsewhere *into the next towns,* that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth" (Mark 1:38).

Nevertheless Paul came to a dead stop every little while, for he met opposition and defeat. He knew ill-health and brutal treatment. Yes, *he* knew how to be abased as well as how to abound, and yet nothing stopped him for long. He was always up and on again, overcoming obstacles, defying the opposition, circumventing his enemies, and forthputting his deepest convictions into effective action. Paul was a man who welded ideals into deeds and paid the price of fearless loyalty to those ideals, whatever the odds against him. He set down once a list of his great experiences, writing more with pride of what he had stood than with any

desire for sympathy. His physical endurance alone is a surpassing achievement.

"Ministers of Christ? yes perhaps, but not as much as I am (I am mad to talk like this!), with all my labours, with all my lashes, with all my time in prison—a record longer far than theirs. I have been often at the point of death; five times have I got forty lashes (all but one) from the Jews, three times I have been beaten by the Romans, once pelted with stones, three times shipwrecked, adrift at sea for a whole night and day; I have been often on my travels, I have been in danger from rivers and robbers, in danger from Jews and Gentiles, through dangers of town and of desert, through dangers on the sea, through dangers among false brothers—through labour and hardship, through many a sleepless night, through hunger and thirst, starving many a time, cold and ill-clad, and all the rest of it" (II Cor. 11:23-27, Moffatt).

But he gloried in what he had to bear and whipped even his own hardships into use that he might wrest from them still further achievement—a spiritual achievement for Christ. "So I am proud to boast of all my weakness, and thus to have the power of Christ resting on my life. It makes me satisfied, for Christ's sake, with weakness; insults, trouble, persecution, and calamity; for I am strong just when I am weak" (II Cor. 12:9, 10, Moffatt).

Pioneer that he was and leading an unpopular cause, he reveals the endurance of a soldier, the vision of a prophet, the heroism of a martyr, and through it all the very Spirit of Christ Himself.

Wherever Paul went, *he said straight out what he had to say.* He was ever forthright with his words, and shot the truth home to men's hearts with absolute directness. Once he went to the synagogue at Damascus and "proclaimed Jesus." The amazement of the people that one who had persecuted those of "The Way" should come to such a position intensified his zeal. He became more and more vigorous, "speaking freely in the name of the Lord" (Acts 9:28, Moffatt).

There was no escaping the soundness of his arguments, and the Jews, "convinced against their will, yet of the same opinion still," enraged, "conspired to make away with him. But this plot came to the ears of Saul, and, although they kept watch on the gates day and night in order to make away with him, his disciples managed one night to let him down over the wall by lowering him in a basket" (Acts 9:23-25, Moffatt). And he went to Jerusalem.

Paul was a resourceful man in the face of opposition. He always had a second plan of attack ready for use if his first one failed, and was quick-witted enough to match any competition that his enemies might bring. When opportunity sought him out, he went with Barnabas to Antioch and set out on a world tour. His experience when he came to Corinth was intensely human. When the Jews "opposed and abused him, he shook out his garments in protest, saying, 'Your blood be on your own heads! I am not responsible! After this I will go to the Gentiles.' Then he removed to the house of a devout proselyte called Titus Justus, which adjoined the synagogue" (Acts 18:6, 7, Moffatt). If he could not preach in the synagogue itself he would at least preach "hard by."

But the Jews bided their time. With the coming of Governor Gallio—brother of Seneca the Great—they saw their chance and haled Paul before the tribunal. But they had reckoned without their host. Gallio saw through their flimsy accusations, and did not even require of Paul a defense before rendering his verdict. "If a misdemeanor or a crime were in question, ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you; but if they are questions of word, *not deed,* and of names, *not things,* and of your law, *not Roman law,* ye yourselves will look to it" (Acts 18:14, 15, Ramsay). And Gallio drove them from the judgment seat, nor cared at all that they fell on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him right in court, while Paul went his way.

Paul was no dodger of trouble. While he was lecturing at the school of Tyrannus at Ephesus, the results of his preaching began to be felt. Real religion threatened the com-

mercialized religion of Ephesus. Paul got into conflict with graft in religion and exposed it fearlessly. "A great commotion arose over the Way. This was how it happened. By making silver shrines of Artemis, a silversmith called Demetrius was the means of bringing rich profit to his workmen. So he got them together, along with the workmen who belonged to similar trades, and said to them: 'My men, you know this trade is the source of our wealth. You also see and hear that not only at Ephesus but almost all over Asia this fellow Paul has drawn off a considerable number of people by his persuasions. He declares that hand-made gods are not gods at all. Now the danger is not only that we will have our trade discredited but that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will fall into contempt and that she will be degraded from her majestic glory, she whom all Asia and the wide world worship.' When they heard this they were filled with rage and raised the cry, 'Great is Artemis of Ephesus!' So the city was filled with confusion. They rushed like one man into the amphitheatre, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were travelling with Paul. (Paul wanted to enter the popular assembly, but the disciples would not allow him. Some of the Asiarchs, who were friends of his, also sent to beg him not to venture into the amphitheatre.) Some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority had no idea why they had met. Some of the mob concluded it must be Alexander, as the Jews pushed him to the front. So Alexander motioning with his hand wanted to defend himself before the people; but when they discovered he was a Jew, a roar broke from them all, and for about two hours they shouted, 'Great is Artemis of Ephesus! Great is Artemis of Ephesus!' The secretary of state then got the mob calmed down, and said to them, 'Men of Ephesus, who on earth does not know that the city of Ephesus is Warden of the temple of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven? All this is beyond question. So you should keep calm and do nothing reckless . . . there is not

a single reason we can give for this disorderly gathering.' With these words he dismissed the assembly. When the tumult had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples and encouraged them; he then took leave of them and went his way" (Acts 19:23-36, 40; 20:1, Moffatt).

Paul came one day to a university town, and was bothered by its lack of real religion; so he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and "also in the marketplace daily with those who chanced to be present." But he had no fear of the intellectuals. Had he himself not been a student of the great Gamaliel? "Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also came across him. Some said, 'What ever does the fellow mean with his scraps of learning?' Others said, 'He looks like a herald of foreign deities' (this was because he preached 'Jesus' and 'the Resurrection'). Then taking him to the Areopagus they asked, 'May we know what is this novel teaching of yours? You talk of some things that sound strange to us; so we want to know what they mean.' (For all the Athenians and the foreign visitors to Athens occupied themselves with nothing else than repeating or listening to the latest novelty.) So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said, 'Men of Athens, I observe wherever I turn that you are a most religious people. Why, as I passed along and scanned your objects of worship, I actually came upon an altar with the inscription TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Well, I proclaim to you what you worship in your ignorance.' . . . But on hearing of a 'resurrection of dead men,' some sneered, while others said, 'We will hear you again on that subject.' So Paul withdrew from them. Some men, however, did join him and believed, including Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman called Damaris, and some others. After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth" (Acts 17:18-23, 32; 18:1, Moffatt).

Paul, the man of action,

". . . never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,

Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong
would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

—ROBERT BROWNING.

But Paul was not merely a man of action. *He was a man of deepest human feeling and intimate personal relationships.* He had strong influence over men and women of widely different interests and positions, binding them all together in the unity of Christian friendship. He worked loyally with the eloquent Alexandrian Apollos; the impulsive Peter; Barnabas, who trusted people; Titus, the tactful; Onesimus, the unprofitable runaway slave, who afterwards became worthy of his name, "the Profitable." He numbered among his personal friends the youthful Timothy, the generous Stephanus, the noble Philemon; Lydia, the Thyatiran business woman; Aquila and Priscilla, the hospitable weavers; Luke, his beloved physician; and a host of others who were devoted to the great-hearted bond-servant of Jesus Christ. His letters abound in friendly greetings to men and women, many of them well known in that day but known to us merely as friends of Paul (Rom. 16: 1-16).

In public and in private Paul lived a fearless and a loyal life. No cynicism of philosophers nor indifference of officials, no angry threats of the mob nor lonely yearning for absent friends, was able to divert him from the supreme purpose and friendship of his life.

"Christ! I am Christ's! and let the name suffice you,
Ay, for me too He greatly hath sufficed:
So with no winning words I would entice you,
Paul has no honour and no friend but Christ."

From the day of his awakening upon the Damascus road to his last letter from the Roman dungeon, he could say, "I am pressing on, striving to lay hold of the prize for which also Christ has laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not

imagine that I have yet laid hold of it. But this one thing I do—forgetting everything which is past and stretching forward to what lies in front of me, with my eyes fixed on the goal I push on to secure the prize of God's heavenward call in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14, Weymouth).

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Mark 1:38; II Cor. 11:23-27; II Cor. 12:9, 10; Acts 9:23-25; Acts 18:6, 7; Acts 18:14, 15: Acts 9:23-36, 40; Acts 17:18-23, 32; Rom. 16:1-16: Phil. 3:12-14.

Purpose of the Study: To see Paul as a man of courageous action and outstanding achievements, worthy of the study of anyone who wants to live his life at its best.

I. *What makes a man prominent?*

1. Who are the students of prominence on the campus?
2. Why is the man "who gets things done" so much admired?

II. *What characteristics of Paul are seen in his outstanding achievements?*

1. What evidences have we that Paul was primarily a man of action? What difference would it have made in Paul's record in history, had he been a man of contemplation rather than a man of action?
2. In what ways does diplomacy make decisive action difficult? How did Paul combine these two?
3. What effect have real difficulties upon a man of action? How did Paul's experience in Corinth, Ephesus, and Athens affect him?
4. Why is it so often difficult for a man of decisive action to have deep human feelings and intimate personal friendships? To what extent did Paul fall into this difficulty?

5. What was the relation of Paul's single controlling purpose to his outstanding achievements?

III. *When is a life at its best?*

1. Are decisive actions and outstanding achievements essential to living at one's best?
2. What is the difference between surpassing another and doing your best? Which is the real test of life?

General Suggestions to the Group

Each chapter is divided into three sections: Daily Readings, Study for the Week, and Suggestions for Group Discussion.

The Daily Readings are intended as the basis for daily Bible reading, thought, and prayer—the Morning Watch. Special care has been taken to suggest questions in each day's Readings. These should stir up thought upon the Bible passages and lead to personal application in daily life.

The Study for the Week is intended to give additional material and to throw light upon the week's theme. It is expected that it will be read by the members of the group after finishing the Daily Readings, but before the group meeting.

The Suggestions for Group Discussion are intended especially for the leader. In the preparation of these the chapter has been thought through as a unit. Attention is called to the purpose of the study which in the form stated gives the aim of the authors in preparing each chapter. The main points for discussion have been determined and the points of contact and application decided upon. The questions covering the outline have been framed with great care but represent only one of the possible points of view which may be used in handling the material. They are therefore only suggestive. The leader should think fundamentally through the material of each week for himself and come to his own conclusion as to how he can best lead the group. From

whatever viewpoint he finally presents the material he should take special care that his questions or topics are so framed that they will bring out the heart of the chapter material and thus make it the basis for real discussion. It is very important that the main questions or topics be worked out in advance of the group meeting.

The Bible references used in each chapter are collected under the heading, Biblical Material, in the Suggestions for Group Discussion.

Chapter I is a study introductory to the course. For this reason, Daily Readings have been omitted from it.

CHAPTER II

GETTING STARTED

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia."

Daily Readings

When strangers meet they still greet each other with the questions which a group of sailors addressed to a certain Jew fleeing from his duty over the stormy seas:

"Whence comest thou?
What is thy country?
Of what people art thou?"

We are all continually asking such questions because, unconsciously, we realize how much the answers help us to find out the qualities of a person's character. As we come to the study of Paul we stop to ask these same questions.

First Day: "Of what people art thou?"

The answer of the other Jew might well have been Paul's own:

"I am a Hebrew; and I fear Jehovah, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land."

Yet Paul would have boasted even more when taunted by the Greek boys in Tarsus. The boy's pride echoes in the man's words:

> I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the

stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.—Phil. 3:4, 5.

And in the group of Jewish boys he may have been heard to say more than once, "I may have my little boast as well as others! . . . Let them vaunt as they please, I am equal to them. . . . Are they Hebrews? so am I. Israelites? so am I. Descended from Abraham? so am I" (II Cor. 11:16, 21-22, Moffatt). "Why, I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin!" (Rom. 11:1, Moffatt).

A genuine appreciation of his heritage is bound to leave its impress on a boy's character.

As a Hebrew of the Hebrews, what traits of character should we expect to find in Paul?

As an American of Americans, what ideals of character have people a right to expect in each of us?

If one should definitely undertake to realize all the noblest traits of his race, what effect would it have upon his life?

SECOND DAY: There are more than family characteristics stamped on a boy's early life. We know nothing of Paul's boyhood home in Tarsus, but there are lines in his later letters which are suggestive. Can you not see a stern Jewish father, and a boy trained to strict obedience as you read, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right; *honour your father and mother* (it is the first command with a promise), *that it may be well with you and that you may live long on earth.* As for you fathers, do not exasperate your children, but bring them up in *the discipline* and on *the admonitions of the Lord*" (Eph. 6:1-4, Moffatt).

What would be some of the contributions of a typical Jewish home in helping a boy become his best? Of a typical home in this country?

What characteristics of our home life would we like to pass on to others?

THIRD DAY: School life in Paul's time was very different

from our own. After the manner of that day, boys were escorted to school by a slave-pedagogue. Paul never forgot the firm hand of the tutor that piloted him past enticing shops and groups of soldiers in glistening armor.

> Before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. . . . But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world.—Gal. 3:23-25; 4:1-3.
>
> Though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers.—I Cor. 4:15.

In what ways would this section of Paul's letter need to be revised if a modern school were used as the illustration?

What has been the relative influence of our home and school training upon us?

Fourth Day: From his earliest childhood Paul was trained in the Scriptures. It was the obligation of Hebrew parents to instruct their children in the Law and the Prophets. The first Scripture which a child learned to recite was the sacred Shema, kept always in the tin box on the door post of the house:

> Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and

when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.—Deut. 6: 4-9 (A. V.).

Paul's parents certainly did not fail to put these instructions into practice. Notice Paul's familiarity with the Old Testament as illustrated in his letter to the Romans and elsewhere:

"Have full sympathy with one another. Do not give your minds to high things, but let humble ways content you. DO NOT BE WISE IN YOUR OWN CONCEITS (Prov. 3:7).

"Pay back to no man evil for evil. TAKE THOUGHT FOR WHAT IS RIGHT AND SEEMLY IN EVERY ONE'S ESTEEM (Prov. 3:4; LXX). If you can, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with all the world. Do not be revengeful, my dear friends, but give way before anger; for it is written, 'REVENGE BELONGS TO ME: I WILL PAY BACK, says the Lord' (Deut. 32: 35). On the contrary, therefore, IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, GIVE HIM FOOD; IF HE IS THIRSTY, QUENCH HIS THIRST. FOR BY DOING THIS YOU WILL BE HEAPING BURNING COALS UPON HIS HEAD (Prov. 25:21, 22). Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome the evil with goodness" (Rom. 12:16-21, Weymouth).

"Owe nothing to any one except mutual love; for he who loves his fellow man has satisfied the demands of Law. For the precepts, 'THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER,' 'THOU SHALT NOT STEAL,' 'THOU SHALT NOT COVET' (Exod. 20:13-17; Deut. 5:17-21), and all other precepts, are summed up in this one command, 'THOU SHALT LOVE THY FELLOW MAN AS MUCH AS THOU LOVEST THYSELF' (Lev. 19:18). Love avoids doing any wrong to one's fellow man, and is therefore complete obedience to Law" (Rom. 13:8-10, Weymouth).

"The Gentiles also have glorified God in acknowledgment of His Mercy. So it is written, 'FOR THIS REASON I WILL

PRAISE THEE AMONG THE GENTILES, AND SING PSALMS IN HONOR OF THY NAME' (Ps. 18:49).
And again the Psalmist says,
'BE GLAD, YE GENTILES, IN COMPANY WITH HIS PEOPLE' (Deut. 32:43).
And again,
'PRAISE THE LORD, ALL YE GENTILES,
AND LET ALL THE PEOPLE EXTOL HIM' (Ps. 117:1).
And again Isaiah says,
'THERE SHALL BE THE ROOT OF JESSE
AND ONE WHO RISES UP TO RULE THE GENTILES.
ON HIM SHALL THE GENTILES BUILD THEIR HOPES'
(Isa. 11:1, 10)" (Rom. 15:9-12, Weymouth).

What advantage to Paul was this ready command of Scripture? In what ways would it be an advantage today? How much of the Bible can we quote accurately?

FIFTH DAY: *How permanent are the results of early religious training?* How largely do they determine our point of view?

As a man, Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I talked like a child, felt like a child, reasoned like a child: when I became a man, I put from me childish ways" (I Cor. 13:11, Weymouth). Yet certain influences remained with him always. Growing up in a pagan city, he held fast to the fact of the reality of one God.

> For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him.—I Cor. 8:5, 6.
>
> And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? For we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,
And touch no unclean thing;
And I will receive you,
And will be to you a Father,
And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.—II Cor. 6: 16-18.

What evidences of the influence of his boyhood training in prayer have we in his later life?

What are the most valuable results of our early religious training? How may they be made of permanent value?

SIXTH DAY: "Of what country art thou?"

I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city.—Acts 21: 39.

The few words reveal the pride of citizenship in the Greek city, with its famous university, one of the three greatest in the ancient world, a city well known because of its trade routes, its large commercial and manufacturing interests. *How would Paul's contribution to the world have differed if he had been brought up in Cana or Bethlehem? What influence does it have upon a boy to grow up in a commercial city under the shadow of a great university?*

Paul's citizenship always signified much to him. Have you noticed his use of the figure of citizenship in his letters?

"You are therefore no longer mere foreigners or persons excluded from civil rights. On the contrary you share citizenship with God's people and are members of His family" (Eph. 2: 19, Weymouth).

Paul was essentially a city man. What influence did this fact have on the trend of his life work? How far will early experience in city or country determine one's permanent interest in city or country life?

SEVENTH DAY: *How did the influences of Paul's early life help to develop his strength of character?* Was there any-

thing in his early life that was likely to handicap his usefulness in later years, or was he justified in his assurance,

> To them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.—Rom. 8:28.

Are there any limitations in environment or early training which cannot be turned into advantages?

What are the great assets of our early life? What opportunities have we for showing our appreciation of these?

Study for the Week

"I am a Jew, belonging to Tarsus in Cilicia, and am a citizen of no unimportant city" (Acts 21:39, Weymouth).

By his own account, Paul was brought up after the strictest manner of his people. A Hebrew sprung from Hebrews, from his very birth his father and mother planned his life after the severest Pharisaic rules. When he was circumcised on the eighth day, they gave him the name of Saul after the great King of his tribe. Because he was born a citizen of the Roman Empire, he also was called Paul.

I

Among the Pharisees the word of the Lord was the guide and rule of every slightest act. They regarded their sacred Scriptures, particularly the Law of Moses, with the utmost veneration, and strove to order their lives according to the strict teaching of the Law.

Jewish religious life centered around the worship and instruction in the synagogues. The synagogue at Tarsus was an insignificant building when compared with the magnificent pagan temples. There may have been a sheaf of wheat or a pot of manna carved over the door. Inside, in place of the high altar, was a seven-branched candlestick, and a star lamp burned perpetually before a rich curtain.

The sacred rolls were kept behind this curtain. The strict Pharisees attended service not only on Sabbaths, but on Mondays and Thursdays as well.

As a boy, Paul sat with his mother behind the screened section for the women, and listened to the portions of the Law and Prophets read Sabbath by Sabbath, and to the learned discourses of the rabbis or the heated discussions which his father and the other men might carry on over some minute point of the Law's interpretation.

We are tempted to wonder how much Paul understood of the long discussions. At least he knew from experience how rigid were the requirements of the Sabbath. When the service was over his father and the other men went home by the main streets, while he and his mother made their way down the side alleys with slow and lagging steps.

On the way to the synagogue they must go in haste, "rejoicing to go to the house of the Lord"; but it would have been a shameful thing to hurry home, no matter how hungry one might be! He must take care, too, not to drag his toe in the dust lest he break the fourth commandment and be guilty of plowing. Though the penalty of sin would not be upon him until he became a son of the Law at the age of twelve, yet as a child he must learn to observe every detail.

The rest of the day would be spent mostly indoors, as no strict Pharisee would be guilty of walking a mile on the Sabbath. After sundown they could turn back the mirror which had been turned to the wall the afternoon before; lest, during the hours of the Sabbath, his mother, beholding her face in the glass, should discover a grey hair among the black and yield to the temptation to pull it out, thus profaning the Sabbath and breaking the fourth commandment by "reaping." Nor was it until after sundown that the tiny oil lamps which had been allowed to burn out the night before could be refilled. Even today there are Jews who on Friday evening use candles which will burn themselves out rather than turn out the electric lights in their houses on the Sabbath—6 P. M. Friday to 6 P. M. Saturday; for the

law of the Sabbath permits no work and strict Jews have always kept the letter of the Law intact.

Paul began to realize very early that he was not as other boys on the streets of Tarsus. Were not ropes stretched across the Ghetto all Sabbath lest the pagans profane the day in the sight of the Jews? Greek homes were never scrupulously purged of leaven the day before the spring festival of the passover. Candles did not blaze for members of a Greek family during the winter feast; nor were Greek boys educated in the synagogue school.

When he was old enough to be taken to school by the slave-pedagogue, Paul must arrive by seven in the morning. He had no text books. He learned to write and do sums on the sanded floor of the synagogue, and later on a piece of board with chalk. He must write both Hebrew and Greek, and learn to read from the sentences which the teacher wrote. But everything he read or wrote was from the Old Testament. He never learned in school to sing—a pagan delight—or to draw as did the Greeks. Lessons consisted chiefly in learning by heart long portions of the Pentateuch and Psalms. The teacher recited a verse and the twenty or thirty shrill-voiced boys sitting cross-legged on the sanded floor shouted after him in monotonous sing-song until they knew it.

As we consider the strict discipline of the Pharisaic home, the formal education where excessive emphasis on memory work tended to stamp out originality, the rigid laws of the Sabbath, the constant reiteration of the superiority of Jews to Gentiles, we are bound to ask whether with all this seeming narrowness there were not elements of real strength. *What advantages for an active, impulsive boy come from severe discipline? To what extent would a sense of superiority carry with it a sense of responsibility? What were the permanent contributions of such a religious training?*

II

Paul was more than a Jew. He was a Jew of Tarsus.

Had he been a Jew of Jerusalem could he have become the leader of the Gentile Church?

Tarsus was one of the three great university centers and literary capitals of the ancient world. Athens and Alexandria were her only rivals. Each had its famous alumni. The poet Aretas was a brilliant son of Tarsus. His verses were quoted even by the people on the streets. Strabo, the well-known geographer, had been a student at the university, and his fame but added to the enthusiasm of the boys who gathered at the great wharves of the river Cydnus, where gallant ships rode at anchor waiting for a favorable wind to carry them, with their rich cargo of wool and leather and marble, to the ends of the earth, even to far-off Spain.

As Paul learned to spin and weave the goats' hair into tent cloth, did he dream of the day when some time he might sail away on those many-oared ships? When he was free from school and work, where did he like best to go? To the wharves where the ships were coming and going? To the market place where the potter was at work with his wheel? If one may guess from the figures of speech which flash through his letters, he used often to haunt the Greek gymnasium where he watched the swimming and wrestling matches. It must have been in the river he learned to swim, for no Pharisee would permit his son to bathe in the pools of those heathen schools. He could not have gone to the public games, but we can be sure that he watched the practice for the races in the big theater and was eager to learn from his Greek friends who had won the victor's wreath.

But dearly as this energetic boy loved the city's athletes, he delighted yet more in the sight of the stalwart soldiers with their weapons for offense and defense, the tall spears and short bronze swords, brawny men clad in bright tunics with glistening metal helmets and greaves, strong shields and stout leather boots. We see the long lines of Roman soldiers through the boy's eyes as we read the man's words: "Take God's armour, that you may be able to make a stand upon

the evil day and hold your ground by overcoming all the foe. Hold your ground, *tighten the belt of truth about* your *loins, wear integrity as your coat of mail,* and have your *feet* shod *with the stability of the gospel of peace;* above all, take faith as your shield, to enable you to quench all the fire-tipped darts flung by the evil one, put on *salvation as your helmet,* and take *the Spirit as* your *sword* (that is, *the word of God*)" (Eph. 6: 13-17, Moffatt).

We hear the military music in the "sounding brass and clanging cymbal." We catch the gleam of the sun on the "armor of light"; and we, too, feel a thrill with this city boy in the presence of the soldiers, his soldiers. For was he not a Roman citizen?

There were limitations in the life of Paul which grew out of his environment in Tarsus. First, last, and always he was a city boy. With all his splendid sympathy he would never fully understand the man who had small contact with the world of men. Some things were forever determined by his early life. In what ways might we expect the combination of narrow Jewish legalism and life in a cosmopolitan city to affect his later life?

What part do our heritage and early training play in shaping our future? We sometimes try to ignore them completely. Is there anything there which cannot become an asset?

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Phil. 3: 4, 5; II Cor. 11: 21, 22; Rom. 11: 1, 2; Eph. 6: 1-4; Gal. 3: 23-25; 4: 1-3; I Cor. 4: 15; Deut. 6: 4-9; I Cor. 8: 5, 6; II Cor. 6: 16-18; Acts 21: 39; Eph. 2: 19; Rom. 8: 28; Eph. 6: 13-17.

Purpose of the Study: To point out how far Paul's heritage and early training may be expected to influence his life and thus to lead to the discovery of how far one's own past can serve as an asset in future achievements.

I. *What is the relative importance of heritage, training, and environment in determining one's future?*

II. *What are the principal facts in Paul's early life which confirm or contradict the conclusions regarding the relative importance of these three factors?*

1. As a Hebrew of the Hebrews, what traits of character should we expect to find in Paul?

2. Describe Paul's early training. What was its chief characteristic? Compare this training with that of Greek boys of his day; with that of boys today. What was the value of the strict Jewish Sabbath observance?

3. What characteristics of a city like Tarsus would tend to emphasize Paul's Jewish traits? What would tend to broaden them?

III. *In the light of the study of Paul's early life, what modifications should be made in the conclusions regarding the relative importance of heritage, training, and environment?*

1. In what ways does racial heritage determine the type and degree of achievement?
   a. Which is the stronger—a civilization made up of pure stock of one race, or a cosmopolitan civilization? Why?
   b. In what ways would the world be the poorer by the elimination of any one race?
2. What elements in our home training are of most value to us today?
   a. Why does each succeeding generation of children tend to look upon the regulations of parents as unreasonable and unduly rigid? If you had the choice between an indulgent and a strict home training, which would you choose? Why?
   b. To what extent does the enforcement of religious observances in childhood tend to make a reli-

gious adult? Compare these with required music practice in its effect upon a taste for music.

c. How may we today truly observe Sunday and still have it both a day of joy and spiritual growth?

3. In how far is the range of one's interests and ambitions determined by his environment?

IV. *What is the relation of a person's early life to his future achievements?*

1. How far may we expect to find in Paul's future, evidences of his race, training, and environment? What determining influences have these three factors in a person's future today?
2. Is there anything in one's heritage, early training, and environment which cannot become an asset?

CHAPTER III

PREPARING TO LIVE

"Think on these things; these things do."

Daily Readings

We all start life with some kind of heritage. The influences that shape our early years are determined for us. One has little to say about the beginnings of his career. But when a man enters college this is no longer true. It is up to him to put distinctive quality into his thought and action, to decide the sort of life he will live, what he will do with

> "The highest gift that ever nature gave,
> The inalienable birthright of mankind,
> The freedom of an independent mind."
> —Goethe.

First Day: Long before Paul's day the Hebrews laid emphasis on the value of education. Their ancient sages frequently sang the praises of wisdom.

> Wisdom crieth aloud in the street;
> She uttereth her voice in the broad places:
> Unto you, O men, I call;
> And my voice is to the sons of men.
> Now therefore, my sons, hearken unto me;
> For blessed are they that keep my ways.
> Hear instruction, and be wise,
> And refuse it not.
> *For whoso findeth me findeth life,*
> And shall obtain favor of Jehovah,

> But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul:
> All they that hate me love death.
> Riches and honor are with me;
> Yea, *durable wealth and righteousness.*
> —The Book of Proverbs.

What did the wise men mean by wisdom? How does it differ from knowledge?

It was with deep appreciation of the added resources at his command that Paul spoke of his training in Jerusalem:

> I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers.—Acts 22:3.

How can education open up larger opportunities?

In what ways would it be a loss if we were unable to finish our college course?

Second Day: Paul was no mean student. He was never satisfied with less than the best that his education could give. He speaks with genuine pride of his record in Jerusalem:

> I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of my own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. —Gal. 1:14.

The strict training of his boyhood was intensified during the years with Gamaliel. The discipline of mind which these years gave, left an indelible impression on the man. There was a saying among the Hebrews, describing their conception of education, "The mind of a good student is like a well-plastered cistern from which no word of his instructor should ever escape."

According to modern standards of education, where was Paul's training inadequate?

In what ways could he make use of his vast acquisition of rabbinical learning?

What is the test of the value of college studies?

THIRD DAY: One of the greatest factors in Paul's education was Gamaliel. An able man leaves an impress on his students for all time. Paul could not fail to mention the far-reaching influence of his teacher upon his own life.

Notice the consideration given to Gamaliel's words in counsel:

> There stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honor of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while. And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do. For before these days rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolment, and drew away some of the people after him: he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God. And to him they agreed.—Acts 5:34-40.

Is this the best way to test new causes?

What were the elements of strength in Gamaliel's leadership?

When is the influence of a professor great and abiding?

How far should the subject and how far should the teacher be the deciding factor in selecting college electives?

FOURTH DAY: *What contribution to our education comes from those whose inheritance and training differ widely from our own?*

During his student days in Jerusalem, Paul had opportunity for contact with men from distant nations.

> Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven . . . Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God.—Acts 2: 5, 9-11.

Paul was a strict Pharisee. *How far would he consider it important to have this contact with men from all parts of the empire? In what respects did it actually affect the character of his future work?* Note how he later turned this knowledge of men to good account:

> To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: *I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some.*—I Cor. 9: 20-22.

FIFTH DAY: *What is the place of religious exercises in education?*

How far does compulsory religious training influence later life? One of the presidents of the United States declares that as he looks back on his undergraduate days he is very thankful for compulsory church attendance, and deeply deplores the fact that it has been given up in his Alma Mater. *What is the real value in the united worship of the entire student body?*

If you were in authority would you make attendance upon

religious services a prominent part of the life of the college? Would you make it compulsory?

If you find yourself in an institution where religious exercises are required, as the attendance at the synagogue was compulsory upon Paul in his early years, what attitude will you take in relation to them?

Like Jesus, Paul continued the habit of synagogue worship formed in his youth.

> Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ.—Acts 17: 1-3.

Why did Paul continue to go to the synagogue?

What place does a thorough study of the Bible always take in a liberal education?

How can a spiritual growth among students commensurate with their intellectual development be assured?

Sixth Day:

> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things.* The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, *these things do:* and the God of peace shall be with you. —Phil. 4: 8, 9.

Think: Do—Why?

As a younger man Paul had followed the teaching of the Law with blind devotion. But the years taught him to "prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good"

(I Thess. 5:21). How difficult is this fundamental lesson of education! Education is so much more than mere acquisition of facts, important as that may be.

Why do so many students make the mistake of Paul, and fail to discriminate values, to select the facts that are usable, to dwell on the things that are really worth while? College men and women of today must solve the public problems of tomorrow. The responsibility is already upon them.

What sort of an education do college men and women need to measure up to their responsibilities?

What, after all, is meant by a true education?

SEVENTH DAY: *When is an education completed?* Where in the process is Commencement Day?

Note the suggestion regarding education in Paul's comment on the Berean Jews:

> Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.—Acts 17:11.

If Paul had used the word *educated* instead of *noble,* would it have been equally true? "The Berean Jews were better educated than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

How far are willingness to investigate new truth and the courage to come to new decisions essential characteristics of an educated man? How long does it take one to acquire these characteristics?

Can we read Paul's prayer for his Philippian friends, as follows, and call it a prayer for true education?—

"This, I pray, that ye may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Cp. Phil. 1:9, 11).

Paul, the Pharisee, accepted all things on authority. Nothing new could wedge its way into his mind. Paul, the Christian, challenges all men to openmindedness, summons them to that knowledge and discernment which mean a growing education throughout their lives.

Study for the Week

I

The basis of education is mental ability. No brains, no education. But a good many college students who have genuine ability neglect their work, are all the time making excuses, and resort to "bluffing it through." They even scorn the so-called "grinds." Is there no high duty involved in putting one's mind at its absolute best? What place of priority has hard work in one's courses among the crowded "activities" of undergraduate life? By how much is the use of mental ability made less a matter of conscience than the use of time and money? *Is education really the chief business of most college students?*

Robert Browning had no uncertainty as to the sacredness of mind:

"God! Thou art mind! unto the master mind
Mind should be precious. Spare my mind alone!
All else I would endure! if as I stand,
Here, with my gains, Thy thunder smite me down,
I bow me; 'tis Thy will, Thy righteous will;
I o'erpass life's restrictions, and I die;
And if no trace of my career remain
Save a thin corpse at pleasure of the wind
In these bright chambers level with the air,
See thou to it! But if my spirit fail,
My once proud spirit forsake me at the last,
Hast Thou done well by me? So do not Thou!
Crush not my mind, dear God, though I be crushed!"

How broad and deep a process is education? "Whoso findeth wisdom findeth life," sang an ancient sage; and it is a very suggestive comment on the results of a true education. Education is not erudition, sophistication no substitute for the "leading out" of the inner life. Information on facts is far less than the appropriation of values; mere intellectual culture is far from the whole of education. A man might know all the methods of printing and binding and distributing a book, and yet have no truth out of the book operative in his life. A man might "know all mysteries and all knowledge," and yet *amount* to nothing.

II

In speaking to the Jews of his student days in Jerusalem, Paul said simply, "I was brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel"; and they had the measure of the man at once. A great teacher will often mark indelibly the character of a student even when full appreciation comes only years afterward. Gamaliel was a broadminded man, tolerant of those whose point of view was different from his own, possessed of a dignity and authority that commanded the highest regard from those associated with him. He was far greater than the technique of the Rabbinical law which he taught. *How would contact with such a man shape the thinking of an original student like Paul?*

As a student in Jerusalem, Paul also came under the influence of the extreme Pharisaic party. He identified himself with the strictest sect of the Pharisees. He saw in the Law the supreme embodiment of good, and he strove with all his might to surpass the members of his class in the perfection with which he kept every minute requirement.

Nor could one be educated in Jerusalem and shut himself off completely from contact with the foreigners resident in the city. Jews of the dispersion came from all parts of the world to worship in the temple. The courts were thronged with men from all the great Mediterranean countries, and even from Babylonia and Arabia. Many of the Jews who

came up to keep the feasts settled in Jerusalem for a time at least. Those from the same country frequently joined in a synagogue, very much as the Americans in Rome or Petrograd unite in an American church. "But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen" (Acts 6:9). We have good reason to suppose that the Cilician Paul went to the synagogue of the Cilicians. His cosmopolitan viewpoint probably came from this early association with Jews from many nations. He doubtless also had some contact with the proselytes who worshiped in the Court of the Gentiles. However large this contact, it would be a matter of deep significance to Paul, the Pharisee, that women and proselytes worshiped together in the outer court of the temple, the Court of the Gentiles, while he might enter the court nearer the Holy Place.

Another important element in Paul's preparation for life was the fact that he learned a trade. This brought him contact with the practical life of his day. He makes no mention of it in speaking of his early training, for it was understood without saying that all Jewish boys were taught to be self-supporting, even those who were preparing to be rabbis.

Paul was a hand worker all his life, an able tent maker. Do you suppose that this ability to use his hands had any relation to his clear-cut thinking? A man with an experience like Paul's would probably never have been tempted to make the mistake of some educators who place entire emphasis on purely technical training. He would also have seen that the mind cannot attain its full powers under a system which focuses attention solely on theoretical investigations, with no opportunity for laboratory practice or concrete service. *What is the permanent loss to the person who has only a "practical" training? Wherein does training in thinking, not supplemented by training in doing, fall short?*

Paul was never content when men had simply come to

believe. "All that you have been taught, . . . you must hand on" (II Tim. 2:2, Weymouth), he wrote. His urgent appeal to the friends whose love he would have "more and more accompanied by clear knowledge" was that they should "hold forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16) until the "fruits of righteousness" should abound in a world where ignorance and misery and want are waiting to be dispelled by educated men and women.

III

The tests of any system of education are its results in the lives of those who pass under its sway. Paul's training bore fruit in vigorous purpose and action. He became a flaming sword to make the truth which he had learned prevail in human life. Is the typical college graduate of today like that? Or what proportion of them are truly pictured in the following words of Phillips Brooks?—

"What shall we make of some man rich in attainments and in generous desires, well educated, well behaved, who has trained himself to be a light and help to other men, and who, now that his training is complete, stands in the midst of his fellowmen completely dark and helpless? . . . These men are unlighted candles; they are the spirit of man, elaborated, cultivated, finished to its very finest, but lacking the last touch of God. As dark as a row of silver lamps, all chased and wrought with wondrous skill, all filled with rarest oil, but all untouched with fire—so dark in this world is a long row of cultivated men, set up along the corridors of some age of history, or around the halls of some wise university, to whom there has come no fire of devotion, who stand in awe and reverence before no wisdom greater than their own."

If this is a true picture of the results of modern education as shown in many lives, what is the supreme need in colleges and universities today?

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION.

BIBLICAL MATERIAL: Acts 22:3; Gal. 1:14; Acts 5:34-40;

Acts 2:5, 9-11; I Cor. 9:20-22; Acts 17:1-3; Phil. 4:8, 9; Acts 17:11; Phil. 1:9-11.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: To show how Paul's Jerusalem training contributed to his equipment for life, and thus to discover the place of higher education in an adequate preparation for a growing life of achievement.

I. *What determines one's choice of a college? Why did you choose this college?*

II. *What led Paul to go to Jerusalem to study?*
   1. Why would a devout Jewish father choose Jerusalem as a place for his son to study?
   2. If Gamaliel's school had been in Damascus, is it likely that Paul would still have gone to Jerusalem?

III. *What were the chief influences which surrounded Paul during his study in Jerusalem?*
   1. What were the most marked influences of Gamaliel upon Paul? If Paul had been educated at the feet of a bigoted rabbi, what differences would we expect to find in him?
   2. How cosmopolitan a city was Jerusalem in Paul's day? Name the different peoples who were either living in or coming and going to and from Jerusalem. Compare it with New York or Chicago today.
   3. What were the chief points of emphasis in Paul's religious training in Jerusalem?
      a. Why was a minute knowledge of the law made so important in Pharisaic training?
      b. What place was given to the observation of religious rites? Why?
   4. Compare the custom of teaching every Jewish boy a trade with the practice in China today; with the practice in America. How far would it be wise to apply the Jewish custom for boys to girls today?

IV. *How do modern ideals of education compare with those in Paul's day?*

1. How far should the teacher, and how far should the subject, be the deciding factor in choosing college electives? What was the Jewish method?
2. What are the relative advantages of college life in a cosmopolitan city, a small town, or the country? What should be the basis of choice?
3. To what extent were the Jews wise in insisting on minute verbal memorizing? When are vast stores of verbal knowledge valuable?
4. What is the place of religious education in preparing for life?
   a. How is a knowledge of the Bible essential to a liberal education? What place should it hold in the curriculum in comparison with other departments?
   b. How can a spiritual growth, commensurate with their intellectual development, be assured to students?
   c. Which will better ensure future loyalty to church attendance and the church—compulsory or voluntary church attendance during college days?
5. What is the true test of an education?
   a. What is the relative importance of practical and theoretical subjects in the curriculum? How far is a purely technical course wise? To what extent should men in professions be required to become skilled along some technical line?
   b. What is the difference between education and erudition? What is its relation to real achievement?

CHAPTER IV

A DOMINATING PURPOSE

"This one thing I do."

Daily Readings

Heritage, education, and energy! What are they all for? How shall they be used? College men and women are often "like the surge of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed to and fro." How can they find their center of gravity? What is the one force in life that can make these powers of use?

First Day: Paul was a man of *one controlling purpose.* All through the years in Jerusalem he sought one goal. Like many another young man he came to the city determined to succeed. He cherished high hopes and maintained a steady determination to attain his end. All his education was planned to further the aim of his life. With what a sense of definiteness of purpose he says to his fellow countrymen:

> *I am a Jew,* . . . instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, *being zealous for God,* even as ye all are this day.—Acts 22:3.

What was Paul's one controlling purpose? What effect did this have on the spirit with which he went about his work?

Why is a purposeless life in college a failure?
What is my controlling purpose?

Second Day: Among the Hebrews "zeal for God" found expression in a profound veneration for the Law. Have you felt their reverence for the "command of the Lord, holy and just and good" as you joined in the ancient chant?—

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.
The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever:
The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:
Sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.
Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
And in keeping of them there is great reward.
—Psalms 19:7-11 (A. V.).

What are the values and what are the dangers of expressing devotion to God by extolling the Law?

One of the effects of the Protestant reformation was to develop, among certain groups of people, a regard for the Bible not unlike this Hebrew devotion to the Law. *What are the limitations of such an attitude?*

What are the dangers of expressing loyalty to the college by zeal for its customs and traditions?

THIRD DAY:

But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and restest upon the law, and gloriest in God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth.—Rom. 2:17-20.

Paul's faith in the Law was genuine. He was no blind follower of the traditions of his forefathers. He had made the Law his own. He gave his approval to "the things that are excellent" because he had learned to discriminate in his

judgments. And in all sincerity he saw himself "a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness, a school master for the dull and ignorant, a teacher of the young." To Paul the Law embodied the final word on truth and knowledge. He could ask no greater thing than to pass this on to others. *What opportunity is there for development under a rule of life like Paul's?*

What elements of legalism are there in Christianity today? To what extent is Christianity regarded as a set of prohibitions? What is the reason for this misunderstanding?

Fourth Day: *How far did the life of Paul bear out his loyalty to the Law?* With all the energy of a strong man he sought to make the reign of law effective. Vigorous and intense, Paul would never be content with a half-hearted accomplishment of his purpose. Note how in later years he still vividly remembered his determination to extol the Law:

> For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how . . . I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.—Gal. 1:13, 14.

What was involved in following "the traditions of the fathers"?

To what extent was complete conformity to the Law possible?

How far can obedience to a code of morals be made the test of a religious life?

Fifth Day:

> Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? thou who gloriest in the law, through thy trans-

> gression of the law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, even as it is written. For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law: but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.—Rom. 2: 21-25.

Paul was essentially honest. He expected to find men *consistent with their profession.* He had no patience with the man who considered himself above idol worship and yet profited by the sale of goods stolen from the temples. What would he think of the student who considers himself above taking help in an examination and yet gives it on request? Or, the man who scorns an amateur player who sells out for pay while he himself bets on the team?

Why is it so difficult to live a life consistent with a detailed code of law?

Sixth Day: Paul measured his life against those about him. He saw men fail to keep the Law, while he succeeded. He gloried in his success. He flaunted it in the face of his associates. *He revelled in his conscious attainment.*

> If any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.—Phil. 3: 4-6.

What is meant by "the righteousness which is in the law"? What present-day examples are there of such righteousness?

We scorn self-righteousness like Paul's. But have we lived as fine a life as his?

What did Lew Wallace mean when he wrote, "Better law without love, than love without law"?

Seventh Day:

> And as he (Jesus) was going forth into the way,

there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and mother. And he said unto him, Teacher, all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: Go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.—Mark 10: 17-22.

"What lack I yet?"

Study for the Week

Young, vigorous, and full of energy, proud of his race, proud of his religion, proud of his superiority to lesser men, Paul was no weakling. He had nothing but scorn for the Jew who sought to hide the marks of his religion from the pagans. He looked down upon the Sadducees, who aped Greek morals and denied the cardinal belief of the Pharisees.

I

Paul had a definite purpose. He had come to Jerusalem determined to succeed. He shared the ambition of his parents that he should become a rabbi. He had applied himself with enthusiasm to his studies. His reverence for the Law had deepened during the years when he sat at the feet of Gamaliel. He hurled all his energy into being a Pharisee, a "separatist," keeping every minutest requirement of the Law.

There was strength and virility in the early requirements of the Law. The commandments of Moses at Sinai had been brief and clear and fundamental:

Thou shalt not kill;
Thou shalt not commit adultery;
Thou shalt not steal;
Thou shalt not bear false witness;
Thou shalt not covet. (Cf. Ex. 20: 13-17.)

But the scribes had encumbered these great principles with countless little requirements so that every slightest act of man was determined by law. Religion to them was legal, not vital, formal, not real, a keeping of the letter, not of the spirit. And in their eyes it was as important to wash one's hands according to instructions as not to steal another man's goods. Jesus had pierced the armor of their self-complacency on more than one occasion.

Paul, too, had seen their inconsistency. Right well he knew that "It is not the hearers of the Law who are just in the eyes of God, it is those who obey the Law who will be acquitted, on the day when God judges the secret things of men" (Rom. 2: 13, 16, Moffatt). He determined that however short other men fell he would not be caught as they were. Let come what might, he would obey the Law. This became to the young idealistic Jew a *mighty purpose.* It had the seal of approval from his forefathers. It had been *consecrated by the blood of martyrs.* Had not the great Maccabeus and his brothers and friends laid down their lives in defense of the Law? Had not Daniel braved the lions' den rather than cease praying to Jehovah? Could there be greater proof of the efficacy of the Law than that?

The great prophets had called men to keep the Law. Jeremiah had stood one day in the city gates summoning men to keep the Sabbath day, declaring the blessing of Jehovah on the city which kept the law:

> And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith Jehovah, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but to hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings and

> princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever.—Jer. 17:24, 25.

With scathing irony had another of their prophets rebuked the people for withholding tithes:

> From the days of your fathers ye have turned aside from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts. But ye say, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.—Mal. 3:7-10.

Above all, the *great Ezra,* the scribe of the Lord, *had led the people* of his day *into a new consecration to the Law,* and they

> Entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of Jehovah our Lord, and his ordinances and his statutes.—Neh. 10:29.

Inspired by the example of saints and martyrs, buttressed by the teaching of prophet and scribe, Paul strove to attain that perfection of life which the Law demanded of him. And as he measured his achievements by those of his associates, he could say with pride that he was *blameless.*

With superb self-control, he held himself from evil. With unflagging determination he disciplined himself to observe the exacting demands of Pharisaism. And his pride in his achievement grew.

II

Could any honest man rest satisfied with his achievement? Law is not more religion than religion is law. The very prohibitions of the Law awoke in Paul a passionate desire to burst them asunder and to try the life of lawlessness which was condemned. Do we catch the echo of the struggle in the familiar words?

> But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good.—Rom. 7: 16.

Mere outward conformity to the Law could never satisfy a man like Paul. The relentlessness of the Law baffled him. Its impersonal demands left no play for his personality. He did not question that the Law was holy and just and good. But in the end he found himself forced to admit that however completely his outward life had conformed—and he was blameless—yet somehow he had failed to reach his goal. The Psalmist spoke truth:

> There is none righteous, no, not one;
> There is none that understandeth,
> There is none that seeketh after God;
> They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable;
> There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one:
> Their throat is an open sepulchre;
> With their tongues they have used deceit:
> The poison of asps is under their lips:
> Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
> Their feet are swift to shed blood;
> Destruction and misery are in their ways;
> And the way of peace have they not known:
> There is no fear of God before their eyes.
>
> —Rom. 3: 10-18.

But the Law stood, and he would defend the Law, as his
There was in Galilee in those same days Another who was

born in a Jewish home; taught, like Paul, the authority of the Jewish Law; taken, like Paul, to the synagogue to worship, and listening Sabbath by Sabbath to the same unfolding of the Law and the Prophets. But where the life of the one was narrow and rigid, the life of the Other was broad and free. Paul saw in the Law the final embodiment of good; the Other saw in love the fulfilment of the law. Paul was proud and self complacent; the Other was filled with the power that comes from the love of God. Paul was socially exclusive; the Other loved people and people loved him. Little children shrank away from Paul, but they ran to the arms of the Carpenter. Men and women who sinned looked for no mercy from Paul, for Paul dragged men and women to prison: to sinners the Other said, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." The spirit of Paul was at one with the spirit of all the Pharisees, "accurst is this people that keepeth not the Law." Once in a Jewish synagogue on a Sabbath day, He who was ever moved with compassion for the multitude read from the sacred roll:

> The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;
> Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good
> tidings unto the meek;
> He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
> To proclaim liberty to the captives,
> And the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord . . .
> To comfort all that mourn;
> To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion,
> To give unto them beauty for ashes,
> The oil of joy for mourning,
> The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
> That they may be called Trees of righteousness,
> The planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.
> —Is. 61:1-3 (A. V.).

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION.

BIBLICAL MATERIAL: Acts 22:3; Psalms 19:7-11; Rom. 2:17-

29; Gal. 1:13, 14; Phil. 3:4-6; Mark 10:17-22; Ex. 20:13-17; Jer. 17:24, 25; Mal. 3:7-10; Neh. 10:29; Rom. 7:16; Rom. 3:10-18; Is. 61:1-3.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: To show the strength and weakness of Paul's purpose to make the Law dominant in his life and thus to see the possibilities of absolute loyalty to a code of conduct as the working principle of life.

I. *How far do fine inheritance and early training and a successful college career insure a life at its best?*
   1. Why does the person with all these frequently fail?
   2. What difference would a commanding purpose make in his life?

II. *What was the relation of Paul's dominating purpose to his early achievements?*
   1. What was the controlling ambition of Paul's early life? What evidence of this?
   2. What was involved in making conformity to a code of laws the dominant standard of life?
      a. What were the demands of the prophets regarding the Law?
      b. How did the demands of the Pharisees in Paul's time differ from those of the prophets?
      c. Which received the greater emphasis with Paul—the moral or the ceremonial law?
   3. How far did Paul carry his demand that the Law be made the standard of life?
   4. How well did Paul succeed?

III. *What is the value today of loyalty to a code of conduct as the standard of life?*
   1. What examples have we of Christians who have reverted to living under a code of law?
   2. To what extent can "living right" be made the essence of religion?

3. What place in Christianity has an emphasis upon a code of conduct? In what ways is it non-Christian to make conformity to such a code the supreme demand of religion?
4. How far does training in forms of etiquette insure thoughtful consideration of others?
5. What effect has a struggle to conform to a code of conduct, upon vital progress in belief, character, and service?
6. What is the difference between following a code of conduct and making principles the basis of action? What is the difference between living under the "law" and living under "grace"?

CHAPTER V

THE WILL OF MAN

"Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter."

DAILY READINGS

Jesus had been crucified as a malefactor.
Paul was ready to make the Law prevail.
With the death of Jesus the law of love seemed lost.
In the will of Paul the Law of Moses should have full victory.
Conflict was inevitable. The new wine would burst the old wine skins. *Why must Christianity and legalism always clash?*

FIRST DAY: Could Paul have found in Christ crucified anything but a stumbling block? The Law stated explicitly that a man who had been hanged on a tree was accursed, and Paul believed the Law.

> If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God; that thou defile not thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.—Deut. 21:22, 23.

As a strict Pharisee, Paul would ignore the mad fancy that this crucified Galilean was the Messiah. To his mind, crucifixion was fit riddance for a blasphemer, such as Jesus. Moreover the manner of His death had proved Him accursed

of God and not His "Anointed One." Yet the shadow of that cross was already upon Paul!

SECOND DAY: *Paul was sure that he was right.* But a new experience awaited him. One day a group of Jews from the provinces were together, among them a young man well versed in the Law of Moses and yet daring to maintain that the temple was not the final place of worship or the Law the complete revelation of the will of God.

> And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. *And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.* Then they suborned men, who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council, and set up false witnesses, who said, *This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law:* for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us. And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.—Acts 6:8-15.

Why does it so often happen that people who stand for new truth, like Stephen, are persecuted for their faith? Could Paul have done otherwise than oppose Stephen?

What was there in Stephen's preaching that roused his antagonism? How did the Law justify him for "*fully approving*" Stephen's death?

THIRD DAY: *Paul could not abide the presence of those who differed from him.* Note how the weeks that followed the

outbreak of persecution echo his determination to compel the Christians to renounce their faith:

> And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him.—Acts 22:19, 20.
>
> And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities.—Acts 26:10, 11.

Men must agree with Paul, or take the consequences. *What were the causes of this intolerance?* What attitudes in religion breed intolerance?

How did Jesus meet the men and women who did not share His point of view?

FOURTH DAY: *Intolerance breeds relentlessness.* Fully assured of his position, Paul set out to win his point. How self-will reveals itself in the renewed persecutions by Paul after the death of Stephen.

> And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul was consenting unto his death.
>
> And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. But Saul laid waste the church, entering into

every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.—Acts 7 : 59—8 : 3. (Cp. 9 : 1, 2.)

Note the lengths to which Paul was ready to go for his convictions. *Is it ever safe to go the full limit in any cause?*

Fifth Day: *When can you justify cruelty in a good cause?* Consider the elements of cruelty present in Paul's persecution of the men and women who followed The Way.

> And I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem in bonds to be punished.—Acts 22 : 4, 5.

How would Paul have justified this persecution of the Christians?

Do you believe or disbelieve the statement: "Murder for the glory of God is at once the blackest and the greatest thing that men can do for God and the salvation of their fellows, as they understand it"? Why? *Why have men found it so easy to justify cruelty in the interests of religion?*

What leads to persecution on our campus? Is it justified?

Sixth Day: By every right of logic, Paul the ardent defender of the Law should have found inner peace. But increased cruelty on his part only deepened his *sense of failure*. The memory of his struggle to keep the Law haunted him for years.

"I lived at one time without law myself, but when the command came home to me, sin sprang to life and I died; the command that meant life proved death for me. The command gave an impulse to sin, sin beguiled me and used the command to kill me. So the Law at any rate is holy, the command is holy, just, and for our good. . . . The Law is spiritual; we know that. But then I am a creature of the

flesh, in the thraldom of sin. I cannot understand my own actions; I do not act as I want to act; on the contrary, I do what I detest. Now, when I act against my wishes, that means I agree that the Law is right. . . . So this is my experience of the Law: I want to do what is right, but wrong is all I can manage; I cordially agree with God's law, so far as my inner self is concerned, but then I find quite another law in my members which conflicts with the law of my mind and makes me a prisoner to sin's law that resides in my members. . . . Miserable wretch that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:9-24, Moffatt).

What experiences during his persecutions of the Christians deepened his sense of failure?

To what extent was the increasing rigor of his persecutions due to his realization of defeat?

SEVENTH DAY:

> For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.—Gal. 3:10.

Paul failed in his effort to fulfil the Law. Why? He was honest in his thinking. By the absolute standard of the Law, he could only pronounce himself accursed. Would such an admission shatter his self-complacency? *How far could extreme zeal in persecuting blasphemers be looked upon as a help in removing the sense of failure?*

What attempts are there in modern life to buy immunity from penalty? Why is this always so disastrous to moral standards?

STUDY FOR THE WEEK

I

Paul was cock-sure of himself; why shouldn't he be? Everything that heritage, training, and social position could give was his. Native egotism blinded him to his weaknesses.

Self-assurance sat in the saddle. He had youth and courage, influence and power. One can almost hear him say:

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

Moreover Paul had made his own, a cause long sacred to the best of his race, a cause needing now a champion such as he, and worthy of his best. How could he find completer self-expression than in making the Law prevail. He would become himself the very embodiment of the Law. He would make the Law control his countrymen whatever the cost. And so he set himself to his task—a zealot for the Law. Let him who dare defy the Law, beware!

The place for achieving his purpose was Jerusalem—the stronghold of the Law, the seat of the holy faith. Here in the heart of it stood the temple in its golden glory, the pride of the Jewish race, its magnificence the very symbol of the priceless value of the Law. Here God was worshiped with all ancient rites and ceremonies by the priesthood of Aaron, serving in unbroken lineage. Here the faithful Jews from over the world came to worship as their fathers and forefathers before them had done. Here the proselytes whom the Pharisees compassed sea and land to make, were let into the outer court of the temple. Jerusalem should be Paul's base for conquest with the message of the Law.

II

There were in the Sacred City many synagogues where Jews and proselytes alike could worship. Paul used often to go to one called the Synagogue of the Cilicians, where the Greek translation of the Old Testament was read. As a Jew of the provinces, he was more familiar with this translation than with the Hebrew rendering. It carried him back to his

boyhood days and reminded him of his earliest aspirations to be a keeper of the Law.

Stephen encountered some of these foreign Jews. It soon became evident that he was a follower of Jesus of Nazareth, crucified as a blasphemer of the Law. His disciples had recently created a stir among the common people, "but since they are all devout Jews," reasoned Paul, "who observed the hour of prayer and the customs of worship at the temple, they are scarcely worthy of my attention." Yet as this man Stephen spoke he made it all seem different. He had a persuasive logic that could not be gainsaid. A public debate was on between him and the faithful, and no student of Gamaliel could fail to see that Stephen's opponents were utterly routed. Angered by their defeat, they did not hesitate to distort his words into the damning half-truths that always work mischief.

Yet Stephen was one who could

> "Bear to hear the truth he'd spoken
> Twisted by knaves,"

and when he was brought before the Sanhedrin for trial, Paul saw his face alight with a peace which he himself had sought in vain. He would not tolerate the man. His very calm and dignity stung him to the heart as if he were the embodiment of some higher law which Paul could not understand. This man must be put away! So when they took the blasphemer forth to stone him, Paul could but approve; and while he himself would cast no stone "he was consenting unto his death." He heard the beseeching prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He watched him rise to his knees as the murderous rocks were hurled, listened to his strange appeal, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

III

This was a great new word to Paul, a prayer for forgiveness for one's murderers! The like of it was unknown to

him, unknown to the Jewish system of which he was a part or to the Romans round about with their vindictive justice. Paul was utterly unprepared for it. He had not stood on the cross-crowned hill beyond the city gates when Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He had not heard the Galilean say:

> Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whomsoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. —Matt. 5:38, 39.

He had not heard the Master's instructions to his disciples:

> But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.—Matt. 5:44-48.

Paul belonged to a different school. Long ago he had stood at his mother's knee and recited the words, "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Ex. 21:24). True enough he knew the Jewish law, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart" (Lev. 19:17); but that men should love their enemies was to him an absurd distortion of the Law. It made him furiously angry, and set his heart against the followers of The Way.

It cut Paul to the quick that this blasphemer should be so brave a spirit. He never could forget the sight of him kneeling in prayer for his foes as the jagged rocks cut his flesh and released at last the triumphant spirit. The memory of the scene inspired the fury which sent Paul forth breathing out threatenings and slaughter to harass the followers of The

Way. Through all the weeks that followed he sought by every means that his hatred could devise to torture the disciples of Jesus. He tried to force strong men and defenseless women alike to blaspheme the hated Name. But again and again he was forced to acknowledge their splendid courage and heroic loyalty.

His own failure to keep the Law showed forth in miserable comparison with their triumphant faith. How could he stamp out their loyalty? Could it be stamped out? Their courage haunted him. Being dead, they spoke to him continually. But the Law was binding and inexorable. There were high moments of ecstasy when his self-assurance triumphed again and he rushed on with bitter zeal, yet there came hours of despair when he would fain blot out Stephen and the others and all the wretched past. And yet the Law was "holy and just and good," and he would fulfil it to the end. Did he know himself accursed for his failure? It made no difference. *The Law must reign.* He would go even to Damascus to hound down these blasphemers. He would hold nothing back. If he should "sell all his goods" and give his "body to be burned," surely he might yet avail to make himself righteous in the eyes of God. He might yet make the Law rule over his countrymen.

Paul had not learned to say "What lack I yet?" but deep in his soul the conflict raged.

Suggestions for Group Discussion.

Biblical Material: Deut. 21: 22, 23; Acts 6: 8-15; Acts 22: 19, 20; Acts 26: 10, 11; Acts 7: 59—8: 3; Acts 22: 4, 5; Rom. 7: 9-24; Gal. 3: 10; Matt. 5: 38, 39, 44-48.

Purpose of the Study: To discover the ultimate effect upon a man of relentless loyalty such as Paul's, when he substitutes absolute conformity to a set of rules of conduct for principles of action.

I. *What effect upon the personality of a man of strong will power has a religion consisting of conformity to an unchangeable code of rules of conduct?*
   1. Why is he so hard to get along with?
   2. In what ways is he teachable?
   3. Why is he so intolerant of the opinion of others?

II. *What effect did his unswerving loyalty to the Law have upon Paul?*
   1. What difference of opinion was permitted to a loyal follower of the Law? Did moral decisions confront a son of the Law?
   2. Why was Paul so intolerant of those who differed from him? How would he have justified his persecution of the Christians? Believing as he did about the Law, was he justified in persecution?
   3. How far have we a right to go in opposition to those whose beliefs differ from our own?

III. *What was the difference between Paul's religion and Stephen's?*
   1. Compare the attitudes of Paul and Stephen to the Law. What is the difference between the legalistic Pharisee and the law-abiding Christian in his attitude toward the Law?
   2. Upon the simple basis of justice, what would Stephen's words concerning his murderers have been? In what ways does the Christian attitude differ from the simple justice of the law?
   3. What are the essential differences between the Judaism of Paul and the religion of Jesus? Why must legalism always lead to a sense of failure?
   4. What elements of law are found in Christianity? What is the difference between a legalistic Christian and a real follower of Jesus?

CHAPTER VI

FINDING THE GUIDE

"Christ liveth in me."

Daily Readings

Proud, defiant, bitter, Paul started for Damascus. Who dare oppose the authority of the Law? Let blasphemers beware! Breathing out threatenings and slaughter, he pursued his way.

First Day: *On the way to Damascus, Paul met Jesus.*
To understand what happened, we must study carefully the three records in Acts. Note the common elements.

But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem, in bonds to be punished. 6 And it came to pass, that, 9 I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. 11 And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to

Moral Earnestness.

suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: 4 and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he *said,* I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: 6 but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here,* as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. 12 Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. 14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. 15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me,

Lord. 11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; 12 and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias departed,and entered by all the Jews that dwelt there, 13 came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. 17 And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, 18 and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord, they themselves know and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; 17 delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, 18 to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. 19 Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. — Acts 26. 9-20.

into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. 18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; 19 and he took food and was strengthened. —Acts 9. 1-19.

that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: 20 and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. 21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles.—Acts 22. 4-21.

Think through this great experience. What are one's first impressions?

SECOND DAY: Study again the accounts in Acts 9, 22, and 26. Watch for the significant elements in the narrative.

In what ways is this like the experience of other men who have found Christ? How does it differ?

What would have been the significance of Paul's failing to answer Christ?

THIRD DAY: It is not enough to study the records in Acts. If we are really to enter into Paul's life, we must know how he himself refers to this experience. Note the things on which he dwells in the following passages:

> But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, *to reveal his Son in me,*

that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.—Gal. 1:15-17.

Am I not free? am I not an apostle? *have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*—I Cor. 9:1.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; *and last of all,* as to the child untimely born, *he appeared to me also.*—I Cor. 15:3-8.

Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—II Cor. 4:6.

What did it mean to Paul that he had seen Jesus?

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
I am this dark world's light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright.
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk,
Till traveling days are done."

FOURTH DAY: Paul, the proud young Pharisee, had reckoned the Law the greatest good in life; Paul, the loyal Christian, now *found in Christ* the very fulness of life for which he had vainly striven.

For I through the law died unto the law, that I

might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but *Christ liveth in me:* and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.—Gal. 2:19, 20.

What did Paul mean by the expression *"Christ liveth in me"?*

FIFTH DAY: Paul had wreaked his fury on the men and women who declared that Jesus, the crucified, was the Messiah. His whole nature revolted against the humiliation of such a faith. He could not tolerate it that any people should drag the name Messiah to the earth. Then suddenly in the splendor of the light, he saw that the *Cross was not a shameful thing,* but a *sign of glory.*

But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—I Cor. 1:23, 24.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.—Rom. 1:16, 17.

Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, whereunto I was appointed a

preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher.—II Tim. 1: 8-11.

In the Cross which Paul had thought the brand of shame and ignominy, he now beheld the sign of power. *What made the Cross henceforth his glory? What meaning has the Cross for us?*

SIXTH DAY: In the new life, Paul found play for all his restless energy. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" was his one question. Yet Paul never again thought of himself as doing anything—"Work out your own salvation," he wrote to his friends; "for it is God that worketh in you."

Notice how frequently he repeated this paradox:

> For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. . . . Though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.—I Cor. 15:9, 10; I Tim. 1:13, 14.

How is it possible to explain the paradox? What message has the phrase "the grace of God"?

Is there any way in which such a faith may lessen one's sense of personal responsibility?

SEVENTH DAY:

> Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:* for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not hav-

ing a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith: *that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,* becoming conformed unto his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.—Phil. 3:7-11.

In the old life Paul had sought to know the Law. In the new life Paul's purpose was to know Christ. *What is the difference between knowing Christ and knowing about him? What are the conditions for knowing Christ?*

Study for the Week

In the blazing heat of noonday, accompanied by a guard of soldiers, vested with authority from the chief priests, goaded forward by zeal for the traditions of his fathers, Paul made his way to Damascus. Suddenly he saw light brighter than the light of midday. The splendor halted him in mid-career. As the burning of the desert bush had called Moses from the herding of his flocks, and as the glory of Jehovah in the temple, high and lifted up, had wrung from the lips of Isaiah "Woe is me," so Paul saw in the midst of his darkness the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus Christ.*

And the voice of Jesus came through the light:

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

The words shot deep into his soul. They burst asunder the locked gates of his mind.

"It is hard for thee to kick against the goad!" How hard it was none but a wilful man can hope to understand. The herder used the goad to drive unruly oxen into the way. Paul had often watched them as they passed. *He* had been rebelling then against the guidance, too? But whose guidance?

"Who art thou, Lord?"

The reply came clear.

"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." I am

Jesus, the despised carpenter; of Nazareth, the despised town; whom thou, the righteous Pharisee, hurtest with a cruel hurt.

The eyes of Paul's soul were opened. As he looked upon Jesus he saw himself, no longer a defender of the Law, but a murderer, a traitor to the Lord of life. In one swift moment every shred of lying excuse was wrenched from him. The proud vindictive man could no longer justify his wrath against the followers of The Way. The light revealed him to himself as he was.

And the light revealed Jesus also. The Cross before had been a cross of shame. He had seen a blasphemer hanging there. But the light showed forth a cross of power. The light illumined the suffering of the Christ of God. And he had added to that suffering! He above all others had persecuted Jesus, for he had slain the disciples of the Lord!

"Saint did I say? with your remembered faces,
Dear men and women, whom I sought and slew!
Ah, when we mingle in the heavenly places
How will I weep to Stephen and to you!

"Oh, for the strain that rang to our reviling
Still when the bruised limbs sank upon the sod,
Oh, for the eyes that looked their last in smiling,
Last on this world here, but their first on God!"

"What shall I do, Lord?" rose the anguished cry. What could he do? What abyss of quiet could be deep enough for *him,* blasphemer of the *Most High God!* What sacrifice could atone for *him?* What could blot *his* sin away?

"Arise and go into Damascus," came the voice. The eyes of faith were opened and the inner voice replied:

"I turn, I turn, I turn about."

And he arose and came into the City—the City of God—the veriest antipodes of that city for which he had set out. He came into the City of God, never to depart again—not to threatenings and slaughter, but to dwell therein for all his days with them that were followers of The Way.

"And he arose and came into Damascus." They led him by the hand to the house of one, named Judas, who lived on the crooked street called Straight. And there Ananias found him, he who when he first heard the summons to the persecutor could in no wise believe that Paul had changed.

Had Paul not hounded men like him to prison and to death? What then had been wrought in him? Could it be? Had *he* bowed down to the lowly Jesus? Was *he* ready to suffer many things for Christ's Name? So said his Lord. And Ananias went in faith. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord, even Jesus . . . hath sent me."

Paul's eyes were opened on a face aglow with love. He arose and was baptized into the holy faith of the followers of The Way, ready now to meet prison or nakedness or sword or famine or torturing death for the sake of the Good News. So Paul became a bondslave of Jesus Christ, for the love of Christ constrained him, the grace of God wrought in him, the power of the Cross transformed him; yet in the very act of his enslavement his sin was forgiven, his life found its true direction, his energy found a worthy goal, his loyal heart found the risen Lord.

"Make me a captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Teach me to render up my sword,
And I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand;
Imprison me within thine arms,
And strong shall be my hand."

—George Matheson.

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Acts 1:1-19; Acts 22:4-21; Acts 26:9-20; Gal. 1:15-17; I Cor. 9:1; I Cor. 15:3-8; II Cor. 4:6; Gal. 2:19, 20; I Cor. 1:23, 24; Rom 1:16, 17; II Tim. 1:8-11; I Cor. 15:9, 10; I Tim. 1:13, 14; Phil. 3:7-11.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: To appreciate the significance of what happened to Paul when he saw Jesus on the Damascus road.

I. *What is your idea of what happens to one who becomes a Christian?*

II. *How does your conception of Paul's experience compare with this idea?*
   1. Give a complete account of Paul's experience.
      a. What elements are common to the three accounts?
      b. What features in the record give this the ring of a genuine experience?
   2. Why was Paul bewildered after his experience on the Damascus road? What part did Ananias have in helping Paul to see The Way?
   3. What difference did Paul's experience make in his immediate plans? What light does this throw on the validity of the experience?

III. *What really happened to Paul?*
   1. How did Paul's conversion alter his life as a Pharisee?
   2. Was Paul's a normal conversion?
      a. How far did his temperament, training, and recent experiences determine the type of his conversion?
      b. How do these influence the type of experience today?
   3. What was the balance between feeling and action in Paul's conversion? What part had his human will and what part had divine influence?
   4. As Paul refers to his experience, what do you think he meant by the expressions?—
      "Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" "Christ liveth in me." "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection."
   5. In your own words, state just what you think Paul's experience meant.

IV. *What does the Christian decision involve?*

CHAPTER VII

FULFILLING THE CONDITIONS

"What shall I do, Lord?"

Daily Readings

No great friendship ever grew up in this world where one of the friends held back a part of the price. Christ summons us all to high friendship with Himself. The conditions are so clear and simple that he who runs may read. Paul met the challenge in simplicity and faith, and filled up the measure of his Lord's requirements.

First Day:

What shall I do, Lord?
Arise, and go into Damascus.
I came into Damascus.—Acts 22: 10, 11.

Paul once said to Agrippa: "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." But there is more than obedience in the simple statement, "I came into Damascus." The servant who obeys his Lord does not necessarily share his friendship. Paul had seen Jesus and he knew that Jesus could be trusted even where he could not see the outcome. It did not sound like very much to go to Damascus. *Why should not Paul demand the right to know at once all the things ahead?*

What is the difference between slavish submission and filial obedience?

Second Day: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." Paul had conned the words over and over as a boy. As a man he came to comprehend their meaning. Jesus had said:

> He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me.—Matt. 10:37, 38.

The pearl of great price was to be desired above all earthly gain. All that Paul had was little enough to give for such a treasure.

"But for Christ's sake I have learned to count my former gains a loss; indeed I count anything a loss, compared to the supreme value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have lost everything (I count it all the veriest refuse) in order to gain Christ and be found at death in him, possessing no legal righteousness of my own but the righteousness of faith in Christ, the divine righteousness that rests on faith" (Phil. 3:7-9, Moffatt).

In the above passage, is Paul recording a sacrifice or gladly acknowledging a great gain?

Most of us are ready to seek friendship with Christ on the condition that we may retain some treasured possession or carry out some long cherished plan. "I will do anything you ask of me, O Lord, but it must be music," cried one student. "Anywhere but Persia," said another. What is the difference between *giving up all* for Him and *giving all* to Him?

THIRD DAY: A great cause requires much of every man who really upholds it. Paul met the requirements of the Christian cause, even at the risk of his life. There were times when his friends found it very hard to understand. They would have liked to plan his life, and save him from his seeming foolhardiness.

> And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Cæsarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him. . . . And as we tarried there some days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. And . . . taking Paul's girdle, he bound his

> own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.—Acts 21:8, 10-14.

Why did Paul persist in going to Jerusalem?
When is a man justified in risking his life for his cause?
When is it truer courage to live than to seek a martyr's death?

FOURTH DAY: Courage is a fundamental requirement in friendship with Jesus. Had the mob at Jerusalem wreaked their vengeance on Paul, he would have met his death as Stephen did—triumphantly unafraid. But God put the willingness to suffer for him to a harder test. The sterner requirement is to live loyally under adverse circumstances. For two full years Paul lay in a fetid prison.

> Felix . . . gave order to the centurion that he should be kept in charge, and should have indulgence; and not to forbid any of his friends to minister unto him. But after certain days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me. He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul: wherefore also he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.—Acts 24:23-27.

Like experiences came to Paul many times and as an old man he wrote Timothy the secret of his triumphant endurance:

> I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day.—II Tim. 1:12.

Why was this so severe a test of Paul's loyalty? What similar tests do men face today?

FIFTH DAY:

> They weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore. But after no long time there beat down from it a tempestuous wind, which is called Euraquilo: and when the ship was caught, and could not face the wind, we gave way to it, and were driven. And running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat: and when they had hoisted it up, they used helps, under-girding the ship; and, fearing lest they should be cast upon the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and so were driven. And as we labored exceedingly with the storm, the next day they began to throw the freight overboard; and the third day they cast out with their own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars shone upon us for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was now taken away. And when they had been long without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of *the God whose I am, whom also I serve,* saying, *Fear not, Paul;* thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good

cheer: *for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me.* . . . While the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take some food, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye wait and continue fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I beseech you to take some food: for this is for your safety: for there shall not a hair perish from the head of any of you. And when he had said this, and had taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and he brake it, and began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and themselves also took food. And we were in all in the ship two hundred three score and sixteen souls. —Acts 27: 13-25; 33-37.

SIXTH DAY:

"Work man, work woman,
For there's work to do in this beleaguered earth!"

Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.—I Cor. 4: 2.

Paul, the bondslave of Jesus Christ, was found faithful. "We endeavor to give people no cause for stumbling in anything, lest the work we are doing should fall into discredit. On the contrary, as God's servants, we seek their full approval—by unwearied endurance, by afflictions, by distress, by helplessness; by floggings, by imprisonments; by facing riots, by toil, by sleepless watching, by hunger and thirst; by purity of life, by knowledge, by patience, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love; by the proclamation of the truth, by the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness, wielded in both hands; through honour and ignominy, through calumny and praise. We are looked upon as impostors and yet are true men; as obscure persons, and yet are well known; as on the point of death, and yet, strange to tell, we live; as under God's discipline, and yet we are not deprived of life; as sad, but we are always joyful; as poor, but we bestow wealth on many; as having nothing

and yet we securely possess all things" (II Cor. 6:3-10, Weymouth).

Why did Paul delight to call himself the bondslave of Jesus Christ?

What does it mean to do everything as if we were Christ's bondslaves?

SEVENTH DAY: Could there be a deeper test of friendship than the faithfulness of Paul through "ill report and good"? Yet the real secret of Paul's faithfulness comes out in his suggestions to his friends, "Be cheerful, be unselfish, keep poised!" How? Pray.

> Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. —Phil. 4. 4-7.

"Lord, what a change within us, one short hour,
Spent in thy presence, will avail to make!
What heavy burden from our spirits take,
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with thee?"

—TRENCH.

Why should we do ourselves this wrong, or others?

Study for the Week

I

"I came unto Damascus."

Paul was willing to meet the first condition, to take the first step. He came into Damascus under the mastery of an all-compelling faith. He had seen the Risen Christ. He was no longer ashamed of the Cross. Now he knew its power. So strong a man as he could never have been loyal to a weakling. Paul found that Jesus was vastly stronger than himself. Jesus was worthy of his utter trust, not his obedience only, but his sure and abiding faith.

Paul had more than mere confidence in his Lord. He was swayed by a mighty conviction that there were many things "appointed for him to do," things which no other man could do, for they were his unique responsibility.

> "There is one way for thee; but one; inform
> Thyself of it; pursue it; one way each
> Soul hath by which the infinite in reach
> Lieth before him; seek and ye shall find:
> . . . nothing bars
> A man who goes the way that he should go;
> . . . Go thy way, all things say,
> Thou hast thy way to go, thou hast thy day
> To live; thou hast thy need of thee to make
> In the hearts of others; do thy thing; yes, slake
> The world's great thirst for yet another man:
> And be thou sure of this; no other can
> Do for thee that appointed thee of God;
> . . . Thee the angel calls,
> As he calls others; and thy life to thee
> Is precious as the greatest's life can be
> To him; so live thy life and go thy way."
>
> —Dixon.

And Paul went his way, ready to face death or imprisonment or sudden peril in joyous assurance that Christ would

guard his days. Not even Agabus who had recently come from Jerusalem and knew the temper of the people there, could turn him from his purpose. So because it was the next thing to do, to Jerusalem Paul went, accompanied by the Gentile Trophimus.

II

There was no law against the mingling of Jews and Gentiles on the public highway. But in the crowded streets were bigoted Jews from Asia who hated Paul. Here was their chance to trap him. "Men of Israel, help! help!" they cried, laying violent hands on him as he entered the temple. "This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere, against the people and the Law and this place. And moreover, he has brought Greeks also into the temple and defiled this holy place."

It took very little to rouse the fury of an excitable Jewish mob. People rushed wildly toward the temple and would have dragged Paul out, but the gates were closed immediately. Word reached the Tribune and he came with an armed guard and arrested the man as the furious mob were trying to kill him. The soldiers had to carry him up the steps as the people pressed from the rear.

Paul turned his face toward the Tribune. "May I speak to you?" he asked in Greek.

"Are you not that Egyptian who led the riotous crew of cutthroats into the desert?" the Tribune asked in astonishment.

"I am a Jew, belonging to Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no unimportant city. Give me leave, I pray you, to speak to the people."

Leave being granted, he turned and addressed the shouting mob in Hebrew. That silenced them, and they listened attentively to the account of his life until he proclaimed that God had commissioned him to preach far hence to the Gentiles. That drove them again to frenzy. They hurled their cloaks into the air, flung the dust around, and shouted

madly, "Away with him! Away with such a fellow from the earth." The only thing the officer could do was to imprison him.

The next day, when he was brought out for trial Paul divided the Sanhedrin for and against him by crying out in the council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees." They were thrown into such an uproar by the ensuing argument regarding the resurrection of the dead, that the Tribune, fearing lest Paul should be torn to pieces by them, was forced to rescue him from the hands of the enraged Jews.

More than forty of them swore to taste neither food nor drink until they had killed Paul. Paul's young nephew heard of their lying in wait and came into the castle and told Paul. The chief captain when he heard of the plot straightway sent Paul under a guard of two hundred men to the prison in Cæsarea.

There he had to stay for two years; for Felix, the governor, hoped he would buy his way out: and those two years the hatred of the Jews smouldered and grew hotter. But Paul knew the pent-up fury of the leaders at Jerusalem, and when Festus succeeded Felix he appealed to Cæsar. "Thou hast appealed to Cæsar, to Cæsar thou shalt go" was the verdict. And Paul set out for Rome, whither he had longed for years to go. He went sustained by the same strong faith that made possible the endurance of those weary years of confinement in a loathsome prison, and that carried him triumphantly through the perils of the high seas to the house in Rome. There, chained day and night to a soldier, he waited two years more for trial.

He was not disheartened or sullen as he waited for acquittal on the trumped up charge. Far from it. Well he knew his Lord's teaching:

> A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. . . .

> And ye therefore now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh away from you.—John 15:20, 21; 16:22.

His was the joy that no man could wrest from him—for he had been found faithful.

Up on the Scotch highlands many of the cottages have but two rooms—the larger the "but," where everyone may come; and the little room the "ben," where, if the master of the house would greatly honor a guest, he invites him to enter. It is said of the friend who enters this room and shares its intimacy that he is "far ben." *How many of us have ever been "far ben" with God?*

III

Long ago there was a group of Roman soldiers who knew their Lord that well.

It was winter. The Roman army was encamped by a frozen lake in far-off Gaul. A messenger from Cæsar reached the commander.

"Great Cæsar has been proclaimed a god. Every Roman shall offer incense to the divine Hero."

The commander erected an altar and kindled a fire. And by the altar he placed a bowl of incense. All that day the Roman legions passed, and each man dropped his pinch of incense on the fire. Man by man they worshiped Cæsar till late in the afternoon there came a break in the ranks, and forty soldiers passed the altar casting no incense on the flame. They were ordered back to the commander.

"Incense on the altar or be stripped of your armor and stripped of your garments and march off across the lake! One more trial!"

"We worship the Lord Jesus and we burn incense to no man," was their reply; and again they marched past the altar man by man, but cast no incense on the flame.

Stripped of their armor and stripped of their garments,

they were driven out across the frozen lake. And as they marched into the biting cold, they sang:

"Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee,
For Thee we claim the victory!
From Thee we claim the crown!"

The commander stood silent, listening; their voices grew fainter and fainter—

"Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee!"

Then, out of the cold and the darkness, one craven wretch came slinking back, crawled to the altar, cast his pinch of incense on the flame and dropped dead in the snow.

The echo of the song died away.

Then suddenly the commander stripped off his own armor and cast off his garments and marched out upon the lake, singing:

"Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee,
For Thee we claim the victory!
From Thee we claim the crown!"

At last the searchers found him with the others, forty brave men true to their King—

"Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Forty wrestlers wrestling for Thee!"

Are we afraid to pay the price? Do we shrink from the cold and the darkness and the wide unknown? Or do we join our voices with Saint Paul?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine,

> or nakedness, or peril, or sword! . . . For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. —Rom. 8:35; 38, 39.

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Read consecutively from Acts 21:17 through Acts 25:12; also Acts 27 and 28; Phil. 3:7-14; Eph. 6:5-7; Rom. 8:35, 38, 39.

Purpose of the Study: To understand why the proud Paul was ready to say in all sincerity, "What shall I do, Lord?" and to find the secret of an obedience that does not destroy individual will, but has all the joy of a confident and loving relationship.

I. *What are the conditions of a loyal friendship?*

II. *How did Paul meet these conditions of loyalty in his new friendship with Jesus Christ?*

1. What evidence did Paul give of the reality of his experience on the Damascus road?
2. What did his friendship with Jesus cost him?
   a. How did it affect his life plans? What probable effect did these changes have upon his classmates in the Rabbinical College in Jerusalem?
   b. Review briefly Paul's arrest, his defense in Jerusalem and Cæsarea, and his journey to Rome. Specify wherein these were a test of his loyalty.
   c. Why did the Jews persecute him so bitterly?
3. How far are Philippians 3:7-14 and Romans 8:35-39 a real expression of Paul's life?
4. Why did Paul give himself so unreservedly to the cause of Christ?
5. What part had prayer in Paul's power to meet the tests of friendship with Jesus?

III. *What does a real friendship with Jesus demand of us?*

1. What is the supreme test of a loyal friendship with Jesus?
   a. Why is it reasonable for God to demand unreserved obedience?
   b. What is the difference between giving one's energy and giving one's self? Between giving up all, and giving all?
2. How far should we depend upon God for direction in the affairs of life? What was Paul's experience?
3. In how far is it possible by outward compulsion to prevent or enforce obedience?
4. What is the cost of friendship with Jesus?
   a. How does it affect one's plans and purposes?
   b. Is individuality lessened or strengthened through obedience to God?
5. Why does persecution always lead to a growth of loyalty? In what forms today may this same kind of testing be brought to us?
6. What does it mean to have been "far ben" with God? Have we found with Paul the real secret of a loyal friendship with Jesus?

CHAPTER VIII

A GROWING PERSON

"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature."

Daily Readings

After the day on the Damascus road, Paul was a changed man. But not in a minute was the transformation wrought. The law of Christ is the law of growth—"First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

First Day: The man Paul changed with the progress of the years. Arch-persecutor to ardent advocate, and on to martyr was the change and progress that he made.

> But they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc; and they glorified God in me.—Gal. 1:23, 24.

He learned at length to call himself the bondservant of Christ. The death-dealer became death-welcomer, for he finally came to say,

> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—Phil. 1:21.

The life-long quest of upward and outward change—to this Paul calls all men in Christ.

"Let no man think that sudden, in a minute,
All is accomplished and the work is done;
Though with thine earliest dawn thou shouldst begin it,
Scarce were it ended in thy setting sun."

How ready and responsive to change ought one to be? Does an instant willingness to adjust one's manner of life involve instability of character?

SECOND DAY: The secret desire of every man is for a larger personality and power. This shows in crudest form in swagger and braggadocio. Women express the same desire in efforts to enhance their beauty. To work out one's full destiny, to have the largest possible influence, to be a great person—is a natural desire in the human heart.

> "Self completely to fulfill,
> That's a valid right of man,
> And no more than that I will."
>
> —IBSEN.

Jesus takes this native aspiration in the heart of a man and lifts it above the realm of selfish expressions *by sharing with men His great purpose in a holy fellowship.* He shared with Paul the comradeship of His inner purpose, thus enriching his personality and life. Well might Paul have said with the Psalmist, "Lo, thy gentleness hath made me great."

> I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.—Gal. 2:20.

Such a friendship with Christ releases a man from moral and spiritual awkwardness. It mellows and enriches all the personal quality of his life. As Phillips Brooks wrote in his notes, "There comes a culture out of this religious life. From the silent Bible reading, from the heart's meeting with the wonders of the life divine, there comes a trueness and fineness, a manliness and womanliness that courts never give." *Why is this so true?*

When is a desire for a larger personality justified? How can this be secured?

THIRD DAY: *Jesus wrought in Paul a transformation.* He gave him true perspective of himself. A new valuation of his own powers fixed itself in Paul's mind as he fathomed the glorious reaches of character that were in Christ. A conceited man became humble. A forward man and self-assertive learned how to submit to another's leading. A proud man bowed down to the world's low symbol of shame. A self-sufficient man learned how to abound in Christ, the great Exemplar. *How was this transformation wrought?*

> If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. *Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:* who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.—Phil. 2:1-11.

> For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.—Rom. 12:3.

FOURTH DAY: A hot-tempered man much given to "threat-

enings," and often moved to "blaze out in passionate anger" acquired the grace of patient endurance. His fellowship with the suffering Christ had done its work.

> Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. . . . I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him, we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us: if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself.—II Tim. 2: 1, 10-13.

Are there any temperamental weaknesses over which one cannot gain control?

What are the limits of *self*-control?

FIFTH DAY: The friendship with Jesus made of Paul a friendly man, Pharisee of the Pharisees though he was, and socially exclusive both by birth and training. He set himself to imitate the free accessibility, the open-heartedness and sympathy, so natural to Jesus. *With Paul it is a highly self-conscious achievement.*

"Though free from all human control, I have made myself the slave of all in the hope of winning as many converts as possible. To the Jews I have become like a Jew in order to win Jews; to men under the Law as if I were under the Law—although I am not—in order to win those who are under the Law; to men without Law as if I were without Law—although I am not without Law in relation to God but am abiding in Christ's Law—in order to win those who are without Law. To the weak I have become weak, so as to gain the weak. To all men I have become all things, in the hope that in every one of these ways I may save some. And I do everything for the sake of the Good News, that I may share with my hearers in its benefits" (I Cor. 9: 19-23, Weymouth).

How beautiful in the light of his natural tendency to

exclusiveness becomes Paul's affection for Onesimus, the runaway slave! The very spirit of Christ himself breathes through his letter to Philemon:

> Though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus: I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, *my very heart:* whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will. For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldest have him for ever; no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then thou countest me a partner, receive him *as myself.*—Philemon 1:8-17.

What message has Christianity for the snob?

Sixth Day: No great person, no true friend of Jesus, is provincial. The men who keep company with Him are swept out beyond the borders of local interest, beyond the confines of nationalism, to a sense of the great world-brotherhood. Paul thus became a great person.

> For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: for through

him we both have our access in one spirit unto the Father.—Eph. 2: 14-18.

I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.—Rom. 1: 14, 15.

What effect upon the growth of personality have race prejudice and provincialism?

SEVENTH DAY: *What makes a great personality?*

The secret of personal enrichment lies ever within the hearts of men. A great purpose in a great fellowship controlled by the love that is "the greatest thing in the world," this makes a great person. It was so with Paul. Personal experience is always packed in close about the roots of any great interpretation of life. Paul gave the key to his autobiography when he wrote:

"Love is patient and kind. Love knows neither envy nor jealousy. Love is not forward and self-assertive, nor boastful and conceited. She does not behave unbecomingly, nor seek to aggrandize herself, nor blaze out in passionate anger, nor brood over wrongs. She finds no pleasure in injustice done to others, but joyfully sides with the truth. She knows how to be silent. She is full of trust, full of hope, full of patient endurance.

"Love never fails" (I Cor. 13: 4-8, Weymouth).

STUDY FOR THE WEEK

"The only *fixed* thing in this world is progress," says a great teacher, and with equal truth be it said, "The surest element in personality is *change*." People change. Friend greets friend after years of absence, saying, "You haven't changed a bit." Yet the hours of talk reveal how the one has found life richer and deeper, great powers rising to match great tasks, fine qualities emerging, and a new spirit sitting in possession. The other still lives upon the husks of yester-

day. Life waxes or wanes with the passing of the years. Finer or coarser grows its fiber. Wider its horizons reach or the circle narrows. Ever greater are the depths one penetrates, the heights one reaches; or the more complacently does one loiter in the superficial areas of life. *The surest element in personality is change.*

I

The hopeful element in change is growth. All moral change in people moves in the process of building up or breaking down, creation or decay. Growth is nature's healthful law. Paul grew. He grew in all the higher reaches of his life. Steadily from the day of his awakening he grew, as Peter beautifully puts it, "in the *grace* and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

He grew on all the Godward-looking side of life. What a contrast between the gnarled years of "threatenings and slaughter" and the ripe fruit of Christian character in him who called the runaway slave "my very heart." This is the growth in character-quality that counts most among those who seek to live life at its best. This is the sort of Christian fruit which seeds the earth with humility and affection.

The meaning of those days of inward struggle which succeeded the blinding light, the record does not tell. Three years he hides away in Arabia, finding himself, finding his future in Christ. Tumultuous tides of life surged through him in those days, releasing his powers of growth and lifting up his life like a great tree yearning skyward and out toward every horizon. New impulsions came, a new shaping of the soul. The deepening power of solitude was there, solidifyings of purpose and the transformations that are wrought by prayer.

Over against the law-ruled world which he had known, a spiritual order in Christ erected itself. As we now catch glimpses of a Christian democracy permeating the still semi-pagan world of which we are a part, Paul saw upon the

background of Roman brutality and Jewish legalism a new heaven and a new earth, the glorious liberty that is in Christ. He unified his life in Christ.

Paul began to get his growth. Perhaps at Mount Sinai, where Moses looked upon the burning bush while his heart caught fire with love for his people, perhaps in the wilderness where Elijah wandered in confusion, finding God not in the whirlwind, not in the earthquake nor the fire, but in the still small voice, Paul grew in fellowship with God in Christ. His own experience speaks when he says:

> Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.—II Cor. 5:17.

Paul grew in self-mastery. What a range of inner growth lies between the day of "dragging men and women to prison" and the day when he could say, "I, Paul, a Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, writing to you proud Romans, say unto you, Roman that I am, I am not ashamed of the cross, for it is the power of God unto all them that believe." The record of that secret struggle by which men grow is written large in his victory over shame. Paul grew in mastery over himself.

Paul was a very human person. He had to fight where most men have to fight, for mastery over the body:

> I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.—I Cor. 9:27.

It was no easy battle Paul fought within himself, for he struggled against forces deeply intrenched in his very nature:

> I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do . . . So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, my flesh, dwelleth no good

> thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise.—Rom. 7: 14, 15, 17-19.

And yet he won his victory. To Paul the zealot, patience came. In Paul the persecutor, tenderness sprang up. To Paul the legalist, human feeling became sacred. He grew both humble and steadfast, outspoken and yet long-suffering, self-forgetful and yet unafraid against a darkening future. Paul gained self-mastery in Christ.

This "growth in grace" is all revealed in his parting message to his friends at Ephesus:

> Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.—Acts 20: 18-26.

How clearly likewise this parting from his friends reveals Paul's growth in human friendship. His relationships with men and women grew steadily richer under the inspiration of his friendship with Christ. Instead of fear of him, and

hatred, there grew up in human hearts a warm affection for the great-hearted, friendly man.

> And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they brought him on his way unto the ship.—Acts 20: 36-38.

Affection responds to affection and Paul's life thus reveals how Christ can thaw out a man of self-centered or exclusive nature and gather about him a circle of those who love. Thus any man may grow in friendly grace.

More than this, Paul grew steadily in outreach of affection as he caught the worldwide purpose of Christ. Neither Tarsus nor Jerusalem nor Antioch could hold him. With every journey his circle widened. In Rome, the world center, his heart rejoiced to preach

> Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—I Cor. 1: 23, 24.

II

Released from the narrowness of his youth, and seeking to reach the utmost man, Paul grew to be a great person, a Christian citizen of the world, winning all sorts and conditions of men, for Christ was directing the outreach of his life into conformity with His own purpose for the world. Paul's friendship with Christ was welded into permanence by the hard things that he endured. All the years of his life he rejoiced in the difficulties which beset his path. What a ring of triumph is in his words:

> We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not for-

> saken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body . . . Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and we toil, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, even until now.—II Cor. 4:8-10; I Cor. 4:11-13.

All external things, "those things that are without," one might endure for a lesser loyalty, but Christ alone commands the inner yearnings through the years. "There is the pressing business of each day, the *care* of all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel his weakness? whose faith is hurt, and I am not aglow with indignation? If there is to be any boasting, I will boast of what I am weak enough to suffer!" (II Cor. 11:28-30, Moffatt).

This is that inward endurance of the yearning heart that bears the full seal of likeness to the heart of Christ.

How far Paul goes beyond Brand, who cries:

> "You must first will! Not only things
> Attainable, in more or less,
> Not only where the action brings
> Some hardship and some weariness.
> No. You must will with flashing eyes
> Your way through all earth's agonies.
> It is your martyrdom to toss
> In anguish on the deadly cross:
> But to have willed to perish so,
> To will it through each bodily throe,
> To *will* it with still tortured *mind*,
> This, only this, redeems mankind."
>
> —Ibsen.

Paul far outruns this *willing* of the *mind* to bear all things. The very heart and impulse of his life are all caught up in the one consuming passion. Not his own will but God's

leading now determines his growth, his endurance, and his willingness to die. Paul learned love from Christ—the releasing *love of God.* The power of the love of God beyond the power of mind and beyond the power of will, surged through his life and made him love to the uttermost.

Love changed Paul, love gave Paul his growth in Christ, love gave him self-mastery. Love made him a great-heart-friend, love made him reach out to all mankind. The love of God in Christ made Paul a great person. It can make any person great. By this power alone do men and women fully come to live their life at its best. When the dross is burned away and love wholly dominates a life, then a great person becomes the very embodiment of love and we may catch its meaning in a human life in the realization that

A great person is *patient and kind;*

A great person knows *neither envy nor jealousy;*

A great person is not *forward and self-assertive, nor boastful and conceited;*

A great person *does not behave unbecomingly, nor seek to aggrandize himself, nor blaze out in passionate anger, nor brood over wrongs;*

A great person *finds no pleasure in injustice done to others, but joyfully sides with the truth;*

A great person knows how to be *silent;*

A great person is full of trust, full of *hope,* full of *patient endurance;*

Love never fails.

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Gal. 1:23, 24; Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:1-11; Rom. 12:3; II Tim. 2:10-13; I Cor. 9:19-23; Philemon 1:8-17; Eph. 2:14-18; Rom. 1:14, 15; II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 7:14, 15, 17-19; Acts 20:18-38; I Cor. 4:11-13; II Cor. 4:8-10; I Cor. 13:4-8.

Purpose of the Study: To see how Paul's new experience changed him and to find the source of power of a great man.

I. *What effect has a great experience upon the character of an individual?*
   1. Can a great experience come into the life of any individual without vitally changing him?
   2. What determines whether this change will be beneficial or otherwise?

II. *How, as the result of his great experience, was Paul transformed?*
   1. Specify the most marked changes which his acquaintances saw in him. What do his letters reveal of the transformation which he came to see in himself?
   2. What was the difference between Paul's self-control as a Pharisee and his self-mastery as a Christian?
   3. What are the disagreeable manifestations of the strong will of a self-centered man? Into what were these transformed when Paul became Christ-centered?
   4. What changes did Paul's friendship with Jesus make in his own capacity for friendship?
   5. What was the source of Paul's growing personality?
      a. What does Paul mean by being "in Christ" and "Christ in me"?
      b. In how far does the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians interpret the meaning of Paul's relationship to Jesus?

III. *What difference does a friendship with Jesus make in an individual?*
   1. How does it affect growth in personality?
      a. What is the difference between the possibilities of growth in personality of one who is really a friend of Jesus and one who is not?
      b. What is the difference between law and love in its effect upon growth? Is love always more powerful than law?

2. What transformation does friendship with Jesus make in personal character?
   a. What are the characteristics of a great person? In how far are these open to every one? How are they achieved?
   b. How does persistent self-centeredness affect character? Why is a self-centered man incapable of becoming a great person?
   c. Is friendship with Jesus able to satisfy the legitimate desire for growing personality and power? Why or why not?
3. Why is the life of a growing person contagious?

CHAPTER IX

WORKING WITH OTHERS

"For we are God's fellow-workers."

Daily Readings

Paul, like most young men in their early manhood, was naturally an individualist. The career impulse was strong in him. His convictions were deep, his utterance forcible, his positions uncompromising. He never yielded to his adversaries. Yet as he grew in his powers of leadership he grew in the grace of cooperation. He learned to do team work. *How fully do you think he knew the requirements, the possibilities, and the joys of working with different kinds of people?*

First Day: The people with whom we live all the time are the keenest judges of our team-work. From the day when Aquila and Priscilla welcomed Paul, a wayworn and disheartened man, to their home the three made up a working group for Christ. Both he and they had learned the grace of Christian cooperation.

> After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them; and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers.—Acts 18: 1-3.

When he decided to leave Corinth they went to Ephesus to establish a home, to which he might come.

> And Paul . . . took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila: having shorn his head in Cenchreæ; for he had a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there.—Acts 18:18, 19.

They were ready to risk their lives for him.

> Salute Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks.—Rom. 16:3, 4.

What must have been characteristic of Paul's daily life to win such devotion as this?

How can such a friendship be achieved?
What can it achieve?

Second Day: Most of us have known people who take all the credit for successes in which they have had but a share. Can a great man do this? When the eloquent Apollos came along and won the allegiance of the Corinthian church so that some of the members turned against Paul, what did Paul do?

> For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men? What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him. I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.—I Cor. 3:4-9.

Paul never thought of disparaging the ability of Apollos, but generously recognized all that he had done. He even urged Apollos to return to Corinth because of all that might be accomplished through his efforts.

> But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren: and it was not at all his will to come now; but he will come when he shall have opportunity.—I Cor. 16:12.

How many instances can you recall of people who have shown such tact and appreciation of others as Paul accorded Apollos?

Why is our attitude to those who surpass us where we are strong a fair test of our real greatness of spirit?

How many of us are truly glad over the achievements of those whose scholarship or popularity rivals our own?

THIRD DAY: There are men and women who know how to appreciate great ability and are able to cooperate with their peers. But many of them have never learned to appreciate the work of those in humbler positions than their own. Note the delicacy of Paul's tribute to Epaphroditus:

> I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need; since he longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick: for indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow. I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy; and hold such in honor: because for the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.—Phil. 2:25-30.

The fact that Paul was no more ready to praise Apollos than to speak in glowing terms of a man quite unknown to us save as a messenger from the Philippian church, is proof of his sheer greatness. *What is the secret of genuine appreciation of all the people about us?*

How can we learn to recognize the value of those who are ordinarily unappreciated?

FOURTH DAY: If we have determined to work loyally with others we may sometimes meet such an experience as Paul's at Antioch. Peter was playing an unworthy part in trying to keep the favor of Jerusalem Jews at the expense of loyalty to his own convictions, but Paul could never tolerate anything that was not straightforward.

> But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.—Gal. 2: 11-16.

What was the question at issue? Is it ever right to keep silent on a moral issue for the sake of harmony? When is compromise justifiable?

Can we work successfully with people whom we do not wholly trust?

Should we sometimes try to cooperate even with one whose motive is unworthy?

What is the danger in judging the moral quality of another's purpose?

Is everyone able to respond to the following challenge:

"Conquer with me, for thou must
One day waken, one day rise,
Nobly break with compromise,
Up and fly the evil days!
Fly the maze of middle ways!
Forget the pit of sloth ye trod,
Fly free aloft, ye sons of God!"

—IBSEN.

FIFTH DAY:

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark. And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant. Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem.—Acts 12:25; 13:5, 13.

And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare. And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus: but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. —Acts 15:36-40.

A difference of opinion with one whom we hold in high regard is always hard. Paul at one time found himself in "sharp contention" with the very man who had sought him

out and called him to his great work. *Did this break with Barnabas indicate that Paul had not yet fully mastered the lesson of working with others?* Was Barnabas justified in his faith in Mark? Years later Paul himself wrote of Mark:

> Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him), and Jesus that is called Justus, who are of the circumcision: these only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me.—Col. 4:10, 11.

Sixth Day: There came a time in Paul's experience when he completely grasped the principle of creative faith in others. In the days of his imprisonment he became acquainted with a runaway slave. When the man had found Christ he sent him back to his master, Philemon, with one of the finest letters ever written. It is worth reading, all of it.

"I have had great joy and encouragement over your love, my brother, over the way you have refreshed the hearts of the saints. Hence, although in Christ I would feel quite free to order you to do your duty, I prefer to appeal to you on the ground of love. Well then, as Paul the old man, who now-a-days is a prisoner for Christ Jesus, I appeal to you on behalf of my spiritual son born while I was in prison. It is Onesimus! Once you found him a worthless character, but now-a-days he is worth something to you and me. I am sending him back to you, and parting with my very heart. I would have liked to keep him beside me, that as your deputy he might serve me during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your goodness to me might come of your own free will, without any appearance of constraint.

"Perhaps this was why you and he were parted for a while, that you might get him back for good, no longer a mere slave but something more than a slave—a beloved brother; especially dear to me but how much more to you

as a man and as a Christian! You count me a partner? Then receive him as you would receive me, and if he has cheated you of any money or owes you any sum, put that down to my account. This is in my own handwriting: 'I Paul promise to refund it'—not to mention that you owe me, over and above, your very soul. Come, brother, let me have some return from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ.

"I send you this letter relying on your obedience; I know you will do even more than I tell you" (Philemon 1:7-21, Moffatt).

How much stronger than any command is Paul's appeal to Philemon?

What effect did Paul's belief in Onesimus have upon him?

What may the expectation and confidence of a friend mean in our achievements?

SEVENTH DAY: How far do Paul's words to the churches in Asia help to explain the secret of his team work?

> I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; *giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. *But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure* of the gift of Christ. And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: *till we all attain unto the unity of the faith,* and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—Eph. 4:1-7; 11-13.

Study for the Week

I

Paul was very dependent upon the confidence of his friends for success in his work. This is one of the great contributions which women make to the life of men. He had come to Corinth alone, discouraged over the failure at Athens, lonely for Timothy, who had stayed behind in Berœa, ill and disheartened. Almost at the city gates he found the friendly weavers who opened their home to him and bade him welcome. Priscilla must have been a woman of rare strength and charm, for her name is frequently mentioned before that of her husband. But no one ever thinks of the one without the other.

Between these two people and Paul there sprang up an enduring friendship. He lived with them as long as he stayed in Corinth; and when his desire to go to Jerusalem led him to set out on his travels once more, Aquila and Priscilla went with him as far as Ephesus, where he hoped to return after the fulfilment of his vow. Later on, when he was in mortal danger in the city where he had worked so successfully, his two friends did not hesitate to risk their lives for him. *Do you think that a man who did not know how to work with others, who was not quick and generous in his recognition of others' strength, could have inspired such devotion as this?*

Paul knew how to kindle faith and enthusiasm for Christ. When Apollos came to Ephesus preaching John's baptism Aquila and Priscilla did not let false modesty keep them from opening their home to him, distinguished man though he was, and explaining to him the way of God more accurately.

Apollos was a great preacher; Aquila and Priscilla were humble weavers. But they, with Paul, had learned how priceless was the treasure of the knowledge of Christ; and they were filled with the same eagerness to share it. Under the influence of their enthusiasm, Apollos wanted to preach

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in Greece, whence they had come; and they, knowing well that Paul was too great to have any thought of jealousy, encouraged Apollos to go on to Corinth. *What is the power of a loyalty that loses self in a common cause?*

The unhappy divisions in the Corinthian church which grew out of their letter of introduction could not have been foreseen. Yet Paul was equal to the emergency. His letter to the Corinthian converts, about their bickering over who had been responsible for their coming to Christ, shows anew his remarkable freedom from selfish ambition. Apollos was an eloquent preacher, and Paul made no claim to eloquence.

> And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.—I Cor. 2:1-5.

Nor did he ever claim for himself sole credit for their Christian faith.

> I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow-workers.—I Cor. 3:6, 8, 9.

The generous spirit of Paul toward his fellow-worker met its response in the reluctance of Apollos to return to Corinth even at Paul's earnest request, for fear more trouble would be stirred up.

> But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren; and it was not at all his will to come now; but he will come when he shall have opportunity.—I Cor. 16:12.

There is no surer test of our ability to work with others than our generous appreciation of those who are more successful than we in a task dear to our own hearts. Why?

II

Paul's profound honesty made him sensitive to any lack of straightforwardness. When Peter, in Antioch, first accepted the verdict of the Jerusalem Council that Gentile Christians were in every way on an equality with Jewish Christians, and then refused to partake of the Lord's Supper with them, fearing the condemnation of the conservative party, Paul rebuked him severely. It is very easy to accept the universality of the Gospel in theory, but we find it easy to disregard it in practice. Class distinctions and race hatreds still hold back the coming of the kingdom. Some of the Christians of India are today going through much the same experience as did these Jewish Christians of the early Church. When a man born in an upper caste can take his seat in the communion service beside a low caste man, treating him as a brother in Christ, he has achieved the Christian victory. Do we also need to be reminded of the principles which lay back of that fearless rebuke of Paul's?

> And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.—John 10:16.

> There cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.—Col. 3:11.

What reconstructions will these principles necessitate when applied throughout life today?

III

If we are really to influence other people, we need to follow

a greater law than that of simple justice. We need to learn the grace of patience with others which will encourage them to go on. We would be glad if Paul had believed earlier that he could trust Mark although Mark had failed him once. But the day came when Mark proved worthy, and Paul was fine enough to commend the man who was "useful to him for ministering."

Paul learned, as the years went on, a genuine faith in other people. He found a wretched runaway slave in Rome, pierced beneath the man's armor of defense, and found what his soul really craved, showed him that the greatest freedom is release from the bondage of self, kept him by his side as a trusted helper until he had gained confidence in The Way, and then with loving tact gave him the letter to Philemon.

Paul trusted Onesimus completely, for he wrote to the Colossian Christians of him:

> Together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that are done here.—Col. 4:9.

Is it a mark of weakness or strength to trust those who are striving to make good? What if we are duped occasionally? Are we still ready to trust others?

IV

As we watch this great leader of men winning the loyal devotion of simple folk like Priscilla and Aquila; numbering among his friends such an eloquent preacher as Apollos; such a talented literary man as Luke, his beloved physician; summoning to his aid Mark, whom he had at one time distrusted; bringing a runaway slave to Christ and sending him back to his wealthy Christian master: we ask what was the secret of such effective working with others. As we think of the many trying situations in which he found himself, maligned by his foes, misunderstood by the Jerusalem leaders, driven

from city to city, unjustly imprisoned, yet meeting friend and foe alike with the eager determination to be all things to all men; we ask what is the secret of such persistent cooperation: We find the answer on the Damascus road, where Paul met the risen Lord and began to live for Him. He had caught the spirit of Jesus, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

> Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.—II Cor. 5:17.

> And I do all things for the gospel's sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof.—I Cor. 9:23.

> That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.—Gal. 2:20.

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Acts 18:1-3, 18, 19; I Cor. 3:4-9; Rom. 16:3, 4; I Cor. 16:12; Phil. 2:25-30; Gal. 2:11-16; Acts 12:25; 13:5, 13; Acts 15:36-40; Col. 4:9-11; Philemon 1:1-25; Eph. 4:1-13; I Cor. 2:1-5; I Cor. 3:6-9; Col. 3:11; Gal. 2:20; II Cor. 5:17; I Cor. 9:23.

Purpose of the Study: To discover the place of team work in an efficient life, and to learn how a man of strong personal conviction and independence of action, like Paul, may achieve this ability.

I. *How can an individual make the greater contribution to any enterprise—by unhampered individual initiative or through the slower method of cooperative effort? Why?*

II. *How far was the strong individualist, Paul, able to do team work?*

1. What method did Paul use as a Pharisee in his opposition to the Christian cause?
2. What evidence have we that Paul could cooperate with others?
   a. How far was the friendship of Aquila and Priscilla with Paul based on the spirit of cooperation which comes from having a common cause?
   b. Which was the greater evidence of Paul's power to cooperate—his freedom from jealousy of the superior ability of Apollos or his recognition of the importance of the lesser contribution of Epaphroditus?
   c. Contrast the cause of Paul's opposition to Peter with that of his disagreement with Barnabas. Were these evidences or contradictions of his ability to do team work?
   d. In the effect upon the possibilities of cooperation, how does Paul's distrust of Mark compare with his confidence in Onesimus?
3. What do Paul's experiences suggest as the essentials of successful cooperative work?

III. *How may the ability to work successfully with others be acquired?*

1. What are the most common obstacles to good team work?
2. How is it possible for a person of strong conviction to do team work without losing his independence?
3. To what degree may the principle of team play, as seen in athletics, be applied to student honor? social standards? business? church life?
4. When is it right to keep quiet on a moral question for the sake of harmony?
5. What is the secret of being able to work successfully with others?

CHAPTER X

TAKING OTHERS ALONG

"We are ambassadors on behalf of Christ."

Daily Readings

From the day when Paul had answered the call of Christ, the one passion of his life had been to share with others the new found joy that was his, to proclaim Jesus Christ and him crucified, "to those who had received the call, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." And as we think of his compelling purpose, we are prone to ask how much could this one man really do? How far did his influence reach? How many types of people did he touch? How wide and deep was he able to carry his message into the lives of people?

First Day:

> I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever.—Rom. 9:1-5.

No man ever longed more ardently than Paul to win his own countrymen, to bring to those who were his kinsmen the new life that had come to him. He went first to the

Jewish people. No amount of persecution from them could lessen his passionate desire that they should know his Lord.

Why is it so difficult to speak about Christ to those we know best?

How earnestly are we working to bring Christ to those right about us?

SECOND DAY: Beyond the confines of his own people wherever he had opportunity Paul sought to win others to his faith. We would scarcely choose the courtroom in a governor's palace, and an assembly of prominent men, who had gathered to do honor to a visiting monarch, as the place for a presentation of Christ. Paul could miss no opportunity. He made his defense before Agrippa as earnestly and as simply as if he did not know that it was already decreed that he should go to Cæsar, as if he honestly believed that Agrippa cared. It might be that he could pierce through the trifling cynicism of the monarch. At least he would try his best. He would give his personal witness of the Risen Christ, believing that in the depth of every human heart there is a hunger that only God can satisfy.

> Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. For this cause the Jews seized me in the temple, and assayed to kill me. Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.—Acts 26: 19-23.

When Festus mocked him, Paul still pled with Agrippa:

> King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know

> that thou believest. And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds.—Acts 26: 27-29.

Was Paul unwise to plead for Christ under such unfavorable circumstances?

How far have we let cynical indifference keep us from saying with Paul, "I am ready to come to you. I seek not yours but you and I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls"?

THIRD DAY: Paul had been openly opposed by the Jews and misunderstood by the elders in Jerusalem, from whom he might have expected cordial cooperation. Yet some of these men were sure that they alone knew the will of God.

> And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.—Acts 15: 1, 2.

Peter had known Paul before and sided with him in the Council. There Paul had his chance to speak.

> And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles through them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying,
>
> Brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets. . . . Wherefore my judgment is,

> that we trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood. For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath.—Acts 15: 12-21.

How must Paul have felt when James yielded the main point and yet insisted on a minor technical matter.

How far is it wise to try to win others from what we consider to be error?

Are we judging the faith of fellow believers by the things they do not do?

FOURTH DAY: Even in the stronghold of a pagan city, Paul sought to win men to Christ. He stood on the Areopagus at the request of the Athenians to tell them of Christ. How eager he must have been to convince these learned men of the truth of his message. With what astuteness he sought to win them.

> Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands; as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitations; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

> For we are also his offspring.
> Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.—Acts 17:22-31.

But when he spoke of the resurrection some scoffed openly, others, more courteous, turned away with, "We will hear him again another time." And yet the effort was not in vain. There were some who believed, among them one of the "Professors on the Hill," an Areopagite, Dionysius by name. Why is it significant that a man like Paul should influence Dionysius?

Can any but an educated person approach those whose learning is making them "dull of hearing"?

FIFTH DAY:

> And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed. And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

> But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.—Acts 16: 22-34.

Paul knew the sting of failure; he knew the weariness of partial success. But he knew also the joy of really helping people. His was the quick sympathy that went out to others whatever their need or type. Suffering the sting of the corded lash, we might have expected him to think of himself. But Paul had a "heart at leisure from itself," because his whole life was centered in Christ. *The jailor was a man in need and he found help.* Paul could not wholly pierce the indifference of Agrippa, but he could understand and meet the need of a humble jailor.

What is a person's responsibility to the strangers he meets along the way?

SIXTH DAY: Sometimes we get the idea that the whole story of helping others is told when men have found Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Paul knew that the work was then just begun. Of all the men whose lives he influenced, not one was associated with him more intimately than Timothy, whom Paul delighted to call his fellow-worker. He repeatedly associated the younger man with him in writing, he trusted him on an important mission to the schism-rent church of Corinth.

> I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put

> you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.—I Cor. 4:16, 17.

He cherished his loyal devotion as one of the richest things in life. Could such faith as Paul's in Timothy fail to yield a rich harvest?

> But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel.—Phil. 2:19-22.

Which is the more usual service for others, to win them to Christ or to build them up in Christ?

Paul prayed for Timothy, and he constantly advised him. Where can we more truly enter into the secret of their fellowship than in what Paul wrote to him?

> Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us.—II Tim. 1:13, 14.

Are we entering thus helpfully into the lives of our friends?

SEVENTH DAY: *What made it possible for Paul to influence so many types of people?* We have been studying about only a few of the men whom he brought to Christ. What was the secret of his ability to "become all things to all men, that he might by all means save some"?

Paul believed in people. He knew from his own experience the transforming power of Christ. And what God had done for him, he, being "led by the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:14),

could do for others also. With such a faith, Paul could not but declare:

> Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are *ambassadors* therefore on behalf of Christ, *as though God were entreating by us:* we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.—II Cor. 5: 17-20.

> Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we faint not. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—II Cor. 4: 1, 5, 6.

> And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us.—Rom. 8: 26.

Why do people hold back when the Spirit of God would work through them?

Study for the Week

The greatest influence that any man exerts grows out of the wealth of his personality—an influence that springs from no spoken word or deliberate act, but is the result of his being what he is. "'Character is caught, not taught,' the

inner strength of another life to which we surrender is 'directly transmissible.' The greatest gift the hero leaves his race is to have been a hero. The noblest workers of the world bequeath us nothing so great as the image of themselves! Their task, be it ever so glorious, is historical and transient, the majesty of their *spirit* is essential and eternal" (King). *What was Jesus thinking of when He said, "For their sakes I consecrate myself"?*

I

There is another realm of influence as truly determined by what we are, yet consciously in our own control. How ready are we to share the biggest thing in our lives with other people? How often do we deliberately take time to think of what we may do for others? How much do we care whether we help others or not?

Many of us are tempted to wait for some great opportunity to be of service to others, for some far-off event when we shall be able to distinguish ourselves by signal service in dramatic fashion. *Why do we find it so easy to pass by the people of our crowd?* Perhaps we do not care enough. One of the great griefs of Paul's life was his inability to influence more of his own countrymen for Christ. He knew so well their possibilities, and he sought to bring them his message in natural ways. Whenever he reached a city, he went, "as his custom was," into the synagogue, where, at the close of morning prayers, any man might have a chance to speak. The fact that he was driven out of city after city by the Jews did not alter his custom; he always tried to win his brethren. And there were times when men like Sosthenes, ruler of the Corinthian synagogue, came out boldly and loyally for Christ.

Sometimes we are so sure of the cynical indifference of others that we think it quite useless to try to win them. If ever a man had cause to refuse to exert himself, it was Paul summoned to appear before Agrippa. He had already ap-

pealed to Cæsar. One look at the crowded courtroom, the monarch in all his royal robes with Bernice beside him resplendent in her jewels, would have been enough to tell a man of less insight than Paul that he was nothing but the object of their idle curiosity. Yet in spite of that he pled his cause with an earnestness and depth of conviction that arrested the attention of his hearers. After the case was dismissed they still talked of him together. It would have made a more dramatic story if Agrippa had been won to Christ, but experience does not always work out that way. And all of us meet many such men as Agrippa if we set out to win others to Christ.

There is another experience which is even harder. That is the opposition from people who profess the same faith as ours. These Judæan Christians who were insisting on circumcision had very plausible grounds for their position. It took real courage for Paul to think beneath the surface to the ultimate issues. As we read again the account of the Jerusalem council, we marvel at Paul's self-control. There is no record of his scathingly denouncing the Judæans for their narrow-minded prejudices. He simply tells what God has done for the Gentiles through his ministry. It is so easy to be indifferent as to whether narrow bigots get our point of view, but Paul honestly tried to win everyone he could without compromising his ideals.

One day Paul found himself among a group of men who prided themselves on their great learning. There were prominent Stoics and Epicureans in the crowd. Some of them spoke scornfully of him, as a "picker up of learning's crumbs." But Paul was not a man to take offense easily. With consummate tact he spoke of his observation that they were a very religious people, that he had even seen an altar "To an Unknown God." Then he told them of Christ risen from the dead. It was not the learning of Paul that won Dionysius or the others. We are so often tempted to take refuge behind our lack of preparedness and think that alone can excuse us from ever talking to people who have had fuller opportunities

than we, forgetting quite that we may have something greater than their erudition.

If one really wants to make his life count for others, he must be always on the alert. Sometimes opportunities come in the most unexpected fashion. *Who would have thought of a prison at the time of an earthquake as a place for winning a man to Christ?* Yet because his first thought was for the jailor on that memorable night in Philippi, Paul had the opportunity of winning a whole household for his Master. There is a very real joy that comes from knowing that you are the person through whom some one else has found Christ. But the opportunities are lost, unless one is truly making ready for them.

There is an opportunity for influencing others which is continually open to all of us. Round about us are our friends, and far beyond anything that we can ever dream, their futures rest with us. Do we trust them always? Are we loyally appreciative of their strength, on the lookout to help their weakness, as Paul wrote to his Corinthian converts to put Timothy at his ease when he came to visit them? "For he is engaged in the Master's work just as I am," Paul added. Have we ever felt all our confidence in our ability to do a thing crumble down because some trusted friend said, "What, you aren't going to try that, are you?" After such an experience as that we will surely stand by our friends every time they need us—and all the time.

II

We can never measure the sweep of our own lives any more than we can measure the range of Paul's influence. For nineteen centuries his loyalty and love for people have helped countless thousands to be true to Christ. No one of us will ever do for the Church of Christ what Paul did. That is not our task. But the secret of his influence may become the secret of our own. The passion of Paul's life was to make Jesus Christ real to people, to lead them to share his

friendship with Christ, and wherever, whenever he met people—those were the people whom he longed to help. *Why do we hesitate when today there are so many with whom we might share our joy in the reality of Christian fellowship?* Do we hide behind self-conscious excuses? Is it true that we have a deep and growing faith if it is being hoarded? Can a great joy ever be withheld? Rather say with Paul: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me, and that life I now live I live in the faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me. I seek not yours but you. . . . I will gladly spend and be spent for your souls."

How can we help a person to find the fulness of life in Christ without intruding unduly on his personality?

What is the difference between trying to win others to our faith and sharing with them the reality of our friendship with Christ? Does what Paul says about the relation of Jews and Gentiles throw any light upon this question?

> But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.—Eph. 2:13, 14, 18.

Shall not we who have found the Great Friend of all the world be ready to lead others into that joyous friendship?

Then we can say with Paul:

"On Christ's behalf therefore we come as ambassadors, God, as it were, making entreaty through our lips: we, on Christ's behalf, beseech men to be reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:20, Weymouth).

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Rom. 9:1-5; Acts 26:1-32; II Cor. 12:10-15; Acts 15:1-35; Acts 17:16-34; Acts 16:16-40;

I Cor. 4:16, 17; Phil. 2:19-22; II Tim. 1:13, 14; II Cor. 5:17-20; 4:1, 5, 6; Rom. 8:26; Eph. 2:13, 14, 18.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: To share with Paul his consuming desire that others should know his Christ.

I. *How are individuals led to accept Jesus' friendship?*
   1. What is the importance of the unconscious influence of a Christian personality?
   2. Why do so many Christians fail to put forth personal effort to lead others into friendship with Jesus?

II. *How important a part of Paul's work was his personal sharing of the reality of his friendship with Christ?*
   1. When and where did he find opportunities for this?
      a. Why did Paul so ardently desire to win his own countrymen? Why do we fail to speak to those near us day by day?
      b. Would Paul have been justified in refusing to try to win Agrippa? Why or why not?
      c. Which took more courage: pleading for his Master before the indifferent and cynical Agrippa or trying to win the prejudiced Councillors in Jerusalem from their mistake?
      d. What were the strong and the weak points of Paul's pleading on the Areopagus?
   2. How far did Paul consider himself responsible for the Christian growth of those whom he had reached?
   3. What made it possible for Paul to influence so many types of people?

III. *What is the responsibility and opportunity of every Christian to share with others his friendship with Jesus?*
   1. How far is the extent to which we do personal work a test of the reality of our Christian experience?
   2. What are the dangers of refusing to try personally to lead others to Jesus?

3. Who can do personal work?
4. How is leading others to Jesus possible?
   a. What does Paul's experience show as to the method?
   b. How can it be done without intruding on others' personality?
   c. What is the difference between trying to win others to our faith, and sharing with them the reality of our friendship with Christ?

CHAPTER XI

THE FAR CALL

"Ye shall be my witnesses."

Daily Readings

> But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be *my witnesses* both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1:8.

Thus came the commission for world-wide conquest. Even to the uttermost part of the earth must the witnesses of Christ go forth. Paul shared this purpose. He would go, above all, to the Gentiles.

First Day: From the day when he met Christ on the Damascus road, Paul's life was dominated by this outreaching purpose.

> But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.—Rom. 15:15, 16.

Christ had given him his commission to the Gentiles—

> To open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheri-

tance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. —Acts 26: 18.

Fourteen silent years after Paul saw the Light, Barnabas sought him out in Tarsus and brought him to Antioch. All through the years the desire had grown until it became a mighty compulsion and drove Paul on unwearied from end to end of the ancient world. Paul caught God's purpose for mankind. Year after year he said, "This one thing I do."

Is anyone excused from taking his part in this world enterprise?

SECOND DAY: Paul knew about moral conditions among the Gentiles. He did not offer his assistance where it was not needed. No clean-minded Jew could have grown up in so pagan a city as Tarsus and not had his moral sense violated a thousand times by the degradation which prevailed. All his life long the moral corruption of Tarsus lay in the background of his mind. He was well prepared to understand conditions in other cities.

> And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them. —Rom. 1: 28-32.

> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even

as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.—Gal. 5: 19-24.

Is a man ever "called" to work where he knows nothing of the needs of the people?

Is a man likely to miss God's ultimate purpose for him if he knows nothing of conditions outside his own community?

How can we learn the world's needs?

THIRD DAY: Paul knew not only the moral degradation among the Gentiles. He knew also the hard shell of Judaism. He knew the atrophy of real religion in Jerusalem. He had seen on every hand a formal regard for the Law but continual transgression of its commands. The Jerusalem Paul knew was the same Jerusalem over which Jesus wept and to whose hypocritical leaders he cried out in wrath:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel! Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. But woe unto you, scribes and

Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.—Matt. 23:23-28, 13.

Why was Judaism unequal to the task?
In Christian countries, what manifestations of religion are blocking the world progress of the kingdom? How?

FOURTH DAY: It was not an easy task which Paul had taken upon himself. The word could be spread abroad and be glorified only by that courage which dares to suffer. Ignorance, fickleness, stubbornness, cruelty, made up his reception in the provinces of Galatia.

And at Lystra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Jupiter whose temple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitude. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons,

filling your hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.—Acts 14: 8-20.

But Paul was not discouraged. Where could the need for Christ be greater than here? And so he went straight back on the second journey to Lystra.

And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him.—Acts 16: 1-3.

What are the evidences that modern apostles of Christianity are as undiscourageable as Paul?

Fifth Day: Paul found Christianity able to dispel the darkness of oriental superstition. Driven out of the synagogue at Ephesus, he went to the school of Tyrannus where he taught daily.

And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out. But certain also of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them that had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one

> Sceva, a Jew, a chief priest, who did this. And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. And not a few of them that practised magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.—Acts 19: 10-20.

Paul worked at Ephesus for two long years until the light crept into minds that were dark with prejudice and superstition.

Were the small results worth the long effort? How far should tangible results be made the deciding factor regarding the continuance of any missionary work?

Why are prejudice and superstition so hard to overcome? Why is it so difficult to be patient in meeting them?

SIXTH DAY: The arrogant Romans needed Christ. Paul knew how sorely they needed Him; for he, too, was a Roman born. To preach Christ at Rome—this became the height of his desire. Where else could a world-hungry man like Paul be so happy, despite his bonds?

> And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him. And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.—Acts 28: 16, 30, 31.

With what a note of joy he writes of how through his bonds he could witness to the whole prætorian guard.

> Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest.—Phil. 1: 12, 13.

For the message he had to share was great enough to triumph even over imprisonment.

SEVENTH DAY: *Paul yearned ever for the utmost man.* Again and again he returned to the cities where only a few had believed and new fields of conquest always called him on. His heart reached out continually where his footsteps could not go. Long before he reached Rome, he wrote the little group of Christians there how he longed to press on to them and even to far off Spain, with the word of joy.

> I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; but, as it is written,
>
> They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,
> And they who have not heard shall understand.
>
> Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in

> some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.—Rom. 15 : 17-25, 28, 29.

Have we found our share in bringing His kingdom to men afar off, as well as to those who are near?

Study for the Week

I

If "God so loved the world," there is "Neither East nor West, nor border nor breed nor birth." When that gets into your heart, life takes on new proportions. Your mind leaps out to grasp the bigness of it all. You begin to be a citizen of the world. Trivial things fall back into their place. The obstacles that baffled melt away. When the world purpose comes we must live henceforth as on a mountain. We see life stretching out ahead as broad and clear and green as a valley with only the thought more than ever plain that all the springs of it must come from the mountain tops. The springs of His affection must run abroad through the habitable earth to water all the plain.

"God so loved the world" releases all the currents of life in anyone who will catch the perspective of heaven.

"God so loved the world" necessitates the transformation of the world, for love cannot rest content until its purpose is achieved. Love lays hold of willing men and thrusts them out in service. Christ called Paul to be the first great herald of the Christian cause and the spirit of Paul's answer was,

> "I will bear it till the land
> Is all illumined where I stand."

Paul felt the mighty compulsion to fill up the measure of

his Master's suffering, to carry out the passion of his Master's life, that all men might know Him. Other men might hear a real call to share in Christ's purpose for the world by seeking to win men right about them, but Paul must go "far hence to the Gentiles." The sense of a great mission shaped and moulded Paul's whole life. We cannot measure the influence of a mighty purpose on any man. Paul was a tent-maker by trade, and a rabbi by training. He might have remained all his life an obscure teacher of the Jewish Law. Instead, he became the first great herald of Christ's purpose for all men—"whether Jew or Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bondman or freeman."

The necessity was laid upon him because he had caught Christ's purpose for men. But the necessity was also laid upon him because he knew the need of the world. No summons to a great task ever comes to one who is totally ignorant of the world's need. Transgressors were everywhere in Paul's day. What blackness in a world where Christian morality was unknown!

Tarsus was a great center of Greek influence, and Paul had seen the depths of pollution to which men sank. He knew the dark lives, the vile revelings and drunken debauches. He knew the degradation of womanhood. He knew the strife and jealousy and hatred among men. He knew that conditions such as these prevailed throughout the Roman empire and his witnessing to the power of Christ should be commensurate with human need. He knew, too, the emptiness of traditional religion. Behind the splendor of the pagan temples there was nothing but idolatry for the devotees. Sorcerers plied their trade everywhere. Magic had reached even to the courts of governors. The court of Cæsar in utter arrogance had deified a man. And Paul knew the hunger of the provinces for righteousness. He had seen the intensity of that hunger in Jerusalem that could not longer be endured without relief. He had seen men falling away from pagan faiths and coming from all over the world to Jerusalem to worship.

> Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and *sojourners from Rome,* both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians.—Acts 2:9-11.

He talked with these men and understood afresh the failure of their religious systems. But even the holy faith in Jerusalem was barren and bereft of power. The proud Pharisees understood the Law, but they found no inner compulsion for keeping it themselves. They had only an empty message for mankind; men came from afar seeking bread and found only stones, asking an egg and receiving a scorpion.

The memory of their faces lingered with Paul after Christ had become Master of his life. The inner compulsion of Christ's purpose, and the cry of the great world's need drove him out to proclaim to men everywhere "Jesus Christ and him crucified." And so he set out to preach the gospel wherever Roman roads and Roman vessels offered the means of transportation.

II

The map of his travels tells but part of the story.[1] He goes by boat from port to port or walks on foot along the Roman highways; he crosses Cyprus, passes the robber districts in the Galatian hills, sweeps on to Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and back again to great Antioch by the sea. He quickens Christian hearts again when he tells them the results of his preaching. Again he toils through those same cities, accompanied by Silas and cheered by the presence of the youthful Timothy whom he loved. He passes by the roadway to Ephesus, where he longed to labor, turns aside from the highway of Bithynia and Pontus,

[1] For details, consult map in the various editions of the American Standard Revised Bible, Thomas Nelson and Sons.

goes to the seaport Troas, where the cry of Europe's need finds answer in his heart.

> There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.—Acts 16: 9, 10.

The little party passes through Philippi and Amphipolis, Thessalonica and Berea, everywhere gathering about them groups of converts, everywhere rousing antagonism that drives them out of the cities. Defeat comes to lodge with the traveler more than once, as on the Areopagus; but he always wins his victory in Christ; and he presses on at length to Corinth and even to Illyricum. At last a "great door and effectual" opens to him in Ephesus. He makes brief journeys to the schism-rent church at Corinth. From Jerusalem he goes out undaunted to the long Cæsarean imprisonment. He is not balked by the perilous voyage or the shipwreck off Malta; but on to Rome his progress goes, where for two more years he lived a prisoner. The letter of Clement leads us to believe that he went on even to Spain:

"Through hatred and through strife Paul had to win the palm of endurance, when he had seven times borne chains, had had to flee for his life, stoned alike in the east and in the west, he won the glorious prize of his faith; when he had taught the whole world and had been as far as the frontiers of the west, he left the world and went to the holy place—he, the perfect pattern of endurance" (First letter of St. Clement c. 100 A. D.).

Paul faced all sorts and conditions of need: oriental superstition, as at Paphos, where the Roman governor became a convert; or Hellenic sophistication as at Athens, where Dionysius, the Areopagite, believed on Jesus; or provincial ignorance, as at Lystra, where Timothy became a disciple; or Jewish bigotry, as at Corinth, where the ruler of the

synagogue found Christ; or Roman arrogance, as in the capital, where even some of Cæsar's household were won to the Master. Thus Paul proved out of a rich experience that Christ was a great reality for all sorts and conditions of men. He believed profoundly in the universality of Jesus, writing one time:

> Ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.—Col. 3:9-11.

III

The cry of the world is yet unanswered. As truly as it came from Rome and from Corinth twenty centuries ago, it comes even now from the East and the West. The castes of India cry for brotherhood, the ignorance of Africa yearns for knowledge, the aspiration of China cries out for wisdom—the brotherhood, the knowledge, and the wisdom that are in Christ. The cry comes straight to New York and London, to Paris and Berlin. It comes from nations in anguish; from hearts that are broken, from lonely wastes and crowded cities, from battlefields and homes that are shattered. To all who catch the spirit of the Kingdom the passion of Jesus is still availing—

> When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.—Matt. 9:36-38.

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: Acts 1:8; Rom. 15:15, 16; Acts 26:14-18; Rom. 1:28-32; Col. 3:5-11; Gal. 5:19-24; Matt. 23:

13, 23-28; Acts 14:8-20; 16:1-3; Acts 19:8-20; Acts 28:11-31; Phil. 1:12, 13; Rom. 15:17-25, 28, 29; Acts 2:9, 10; Col. 3:9-11; Acts 16:6-10; Matt. 9:36-38.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: To share with Paul his world conception of the purpose of Christianity.

I. *What leads a person to share the world purpose of Jesus?*
   1. Why do we feel responsibility to share Christianity with anyone beyond our own borders?
   2. What leads the church to put such emphasis upon sharing the Christian life with all peoples?

II. *What led Paul beyond his own people into a life mission to the Gentiles?*
   1. What was it in Paul's Christian experience that forced him out into this wider mission?
   2. What relation did his cosmopolitan life in Tarsus and Jerusalem bear to his desire to work among the Gentiles?
      a. What social and moral changes were needed?
      b. Why was Judaism unequal to the task?
      c. What evidences had come to Paul of the hunger for a satisfying religion?
      d. What was it that made Paul believe that all these things could be satisfied in Christ?
   3. How nearly did Paul's journeys cover the known world? What determined the limits of his activities?
   4. In how far did Paul's experience justify his confidence in the universal power of Jesus?
      a. Contrast the types of people to whom he proclaimed the "good tidings" in his visit to Paphos, Lystra, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, and Rome?
      b. What were the results of his efforts? How far did they show adequacy of the gospel to meet every need?

III. *What share have we in God's purpose for the world?*

1. How does the world situation today, in relation to the possibilities of the extension of the gospel, compare with that in Paul's time?
2. How does our opportunity and responsibility compared with that of Paul's?
3. Is there anyone that cannot have a share in this worldwide work for the kingdom?
4. How can we find our part in this world task?

CHAPTER XII

LIFE AT ITS BEST

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ."

Daily Readings

A life at its best is a wonderful power in the life of the world. Joy fills it; love possesses it; blessings follow it; men seek it. It is forever calling men and women upward and onward to higher achievement.

> "Be noble and the nobleness which lies
> In others, sleeping but never dead, shall rise
> In majesty to meet thine own."
>
> —Lowell.

First Day: Did Paul have a right, on the basis of all that we know about him, and much that we never know about such a man, to say, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ"? We have seen how completely he made good in living his life at its best. We naturally turn toward Paul, for the largeness of life that was in him, but he carries us on beyond himself—on to the very center of his life in Christ. He would not leave us in the court of the Gentiles, in the outer court of the temple. He would have us ever entering in, "restless till we rest in God himself."

> Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved

children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you.—Eph. 4:32—5:2.

How does a Christian show the influence of Christ? What is the difference between mere imitation of another and drawing on the sources of the power of his life?

SECOND DAY:

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries.—Phil. 1:27.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:1, 2.

"What is a life at its best?" we ask. Paul answers: "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." The tests of the life in Christ are ethical tests. Not chiefly in feeling or emotional glow, not in symbols or ceremonies as first in order, not in statement of faith as greater than spirit; but ever and always the tests for those who follow The Way are ethical tests.

Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.—Matt. 25:40.

A manner of life that is worthy—not worthy of home or training alone, of natural gifts or social relations only; but far more than these—*worthy of the gospel of Christ.*

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp;
Or what's a Heaven for?"

THIRD DAY: *When will my manner of life be worthy of the gospel?* When I have learned to live at my best in all my relations with people.

"Let your love be a real thing, with a loathing for evil and a bent for what is good. Put affection into your love for the brotherhood; be forward to honor one another; never let your zeal flag; maintain the spiritual glow; serve the Lord; let your hope be a joy to you; be stedfast in trouble, attend to prayer, contribute to needy saints, make a practice of hospitality. Bless those who make a practice of persecuting you; bless them instead of cursing them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Keep in harmony with one another; instead of being ambitious, associate with humble folk; *never be self-conceited.* Never pay back evil for evil to anyone; *aim to be above reproach in the eyes of all;* be at peace with all men, if possible, so far as that depends on you . . . Do not let evil get the better of you; get the better of evil by doing good" (Rom. 12:9-18, 21, Moffatt).

What essentials of a life at its best does this passage reveal?

FOURTH DAY: *How can I learn to live at my best with people?*

Paul knew the answer, and so he prayed for the friends of whom Epaphras had told him:

"We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, constantly praying for you as we do, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you cherish towards all God's people, on account of the hope treasured up for you in Heaven.

"For this reason we . . . have never ceased to pray for you and to entreat that you may be filled with a clear knowledge of His will accompanied by thorough wisdom and discernment in spiritual things; so that your lives may be

worthy of the Lord and perfectly pleasing to Him, while you exhibit the results of right action of every sort and grow into a fuller knowledge of God. Since His power is so glorious, may you be strengthened with strength of every kind, and be prepared for cheerfully enduring all things with patience and long-suffering; and give thanks to the Father who has made us fit to receive our share of the inheritance of God's people in Light" (Col. 1:3-5, 9-12, Weymouth).

Have we ever found our understanding of college friends greatly deepened and enriched by going home with them and getting to know their parents? Then perhaps for the first time we feel as if we really knew our friends. As we grow to know God better, we understand people so much better, too, and understanding, share the love of God for them all.

How do we grow to know God better? How is it like the way in which we grow better acquainted with our friends?

FIFTH DAY: However deeply Paul grew in his knowledge of God and understanding of people, he still saw the reaches of growth that were on beyond. A man of action from the beginning of his life to the end of it, there is a sense of momentum throughout his spiritual experience—and this, whether he is on the march or languishing in a prison house, chained to a soldier.

> Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 3:12-14.

This is the secret by which any man or woman may

attain, by stretching forward, pressing on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Paul's way leads out to victory, for it has the authority of Jesus. The heart of it all is the life of prayer, the natural expression of friendship with Christ.

And Paul persisted in this friendship till he could say,

> It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.—Gal. 2:20.

SIXTH DAY: The joy of the great companionship was intensified a thousandfold for Paul in his assurance of the *Risen Christ.* The fact of the resurrection was to him the certitude of his faith, the seal of his hope, the climax of his gratitude. The distinctive quality of Paul's character was nourished in this *living* fellowship. The manner of life which he yearned for his friends to achieve gained its full significance only in this. *Only by Christ's presence, radiant in the souls of men, can they grow to be worthy of the gospel.* That living fellowship alone can touch all earthly fellowships with eternal love and glory. The joy of the Easter morning is to be the daily joy of all who are in Christ.

> But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.—I Cor. 15:20, 21 (A. V.).

> O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.—I Cor. 15:55-58.

> If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek

> the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.—Col. 3:1-4.

Why does belief in the resurrection make such a difference in the possibilities of a growing faith?

What difference would it make to us today if there had been no resurrection?

SEVENTH DAY: "Clothe yourselves therefore, as God's own people holy and dearly loved, with tender-heartedness, kindness, lowliness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another and readily forgiving each other, if any one has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, you also must forgive. And over all these put on love, which is the perfect bond of union; and let the peace which Christ gives settle all questionings in your hearts, to which peace indeed you were called as belonging to His one body; and be thankful.

"Let the teaching concerning Christ remain as a rich treasure in your hearts. . . . And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, and let it be through Him that you give thanks to God the Father" (Col. 3:12-17, Weymouth).

STUDY FOR THE WEEK

The most thrilling thing in the world is to live a human life; not a part of it, but the whole of it; not body alone, not mind alone, not spirit alone; but body, mind, and spirit all caught up in the love of God here and hereafter.

> "This is the great adventure: thus to be
> Alive and on the universal sea
> Of being, . . . dauntless mariners."

Such a man was Paul, the great adventurer, fearless, loyal, free. On fire with love, he turned to the full obedience of a crucified Lord.

Forgetting the black years that were behind, he pressed on to the goal that was in Christ.

He met the tests of loyalty with steady courage and unshaken faith.

Nothing was too hard for him to attempt for Christ.

He grew through the years into the poise and self-command of a bondslave of Christ his Lord.

The friendship with Christ gave him the gift of getting on with people.

The leadership of Christ helped him to take others along.

The purpose of Christ released him ever deeper into the world of need.

He took all human-kind into the heart of his affection. Hebrew of the Hebrews—yet citizen of the world, he reached back to all that was best in his race and forward to all that is best in every race—the great interpreter of Christ.

One of the master poets of his people had long ago sung of what God's Anointed should mean to the world.

> It is too light a thing
> That thou shouldst be my servant
> To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
> And to restore the preserved of Israel:
> I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,
> That thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.—Is. 49:6.

As Paul grew in the knowledge of God, he dared the most daring thing of all the world—to think God's thoughts after him; he was ready "to fill up in his own person whatever was lacking in the afflictions of Christ" for the realization of this all-encompassing purpose for mankind.

Not that Paul believed that he or any man could fully understand God. Therein lay the miracle of His eternal glory.

> O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.—Rom. 11:33-36.

But with the joyous faith of one who knew his Risen Lord, Paul pressed forward along the path to the growing understanding of God.

Perhaps only those who have seen three crosses on a hill and the tragic close of a perfect life, have lingered there for a time in deep despair and turned away as did the disciples on that black day so long ago—unmindful even of the promise of an Easter dawn: perhaps they only can feel all the thrill of triumph in Paul's exultant words:

"Now is Christ risen from the dead."

That triumphant fact transforms the bare wooden cross of shame into the light of the love of God. And the living Christ in our hearts makes all life rich and full and free.

> Wherefore, . . . be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.—I Cor. 15:58.

So Paul knew Christ a living Friend, the source of his hope, his inspiration, and his will to be his best. And what Christ had done for him, he would surely do for others too. His constant prayer was that his friends should have a manner of life worthy of the Good News. For well he knew that the proof of the reality of the Risen Christ in any man is a life that shows right action of every sort—today and tomorrow and all the days that are to be.

Sharing with God his yearning for every man, he prays as if for all mankind:

"For this reason, on bended knee I beseech the Father, from whom the whole family in Heaven and on earth derives its name, to grant you—in accordance with the wealth of His glorious perfections—to be strengthened by His Spirit with power penetrating to your inmost being. I pray that Christ may make His home in your hearts through your faith; so that having your roots deep and your foundations strong, in love, you may become mighty to grasp the idea, as it is grasped by all God's people, of the breadth and length, the height and depth—yes, to attain to a knowledge of the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, so that you may be made complete in accordance with God's own standard of completeness.

"Now to Him who, in the exercise of His power that is at work within us, is able to do infinitely beyond all our highest prayers or thoughts—to Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, world without end! Amen" (Eph. 3:14-21, Weymouth).

Suggestions for Group Discussion

Biblical Material: I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 4:32—5:1; Phil. 1:27; Rom. 12:1, 2, 9-18, 21; Col. 1:9-12; Phil. 3:12-14; Gal. 2:20; I Cor. 15:20, 21, 55, 58; Col. 3:1-4, 10, 12-17; Phil. 1:3-6, 9-11; Eph. 3:14-21.

Purpose of the Study: To suggest the value of testing our lives by the standards of a life at its best as we have learned them from the study of Paul's career.

I. *What makes the influence of a friend so powerful?*
   1. What influence upon us has the example of a friend?
   2. Can any but a friend really discover the sources of power of another?
   3. Which is the more permanent influence of a friend—the effect of his example or his revelation of the real sources of his power?

II. *What is the influence today of Paul's life?*
   1. What did Paul consider to be the test of a life at its best?
      a. What does he mean by a "manner of life worthy of the Gospel"?
      b. When is a manner of life really worthy?
   2. What did Paul reveal as the secret of a life worthy of Christ?
      a. What effect upon his life had his continual pressing on toward the goal which Christ had set?
      b. What difference did his confidence in the resurrection make in Paul's experience?
   3. In Paul's life, what was the relative importance of following the example and precepts of Christ, and catching Christ's spirit through friendship with Him?

III. *How can we learn to live at our best?*

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